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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF CALCASIEU PARISH, LOUISIANA, 1840-1912*

By GRACE ULMER

CHAPTER I

DESCRIPTION OF EARLY CALCASIEU

As we see our beautiful towns, and note the squares of built-up houses, the factories, the mills, and the ceaseless hum of industry where the bulk of a busy population gains a livelihood, it is difficult to believe that less than a century ago these blooming prairies, grand old forests, and enchanting watercourses were the possession of wandering savages and formed a part of a vast wilderness.¹

Here the immigrant pitched his tent and found a spot on the banks of the Calcasieu or near some lake of sparkling water, beneath the shade of the tall monarchs of the forests, the long-leaf pines, where the untamed children of nature had so long roamed unmolested, where the Indian engaged in the wild pleasure of his fancy.² Such was the beginning of Calcasieu Parish.

The history of Calcasieu began in the closing years of the eighteenth century when the tract between the Rio Hondo and Sabine River, called for years and neutral strip, was under Spanish jurisdiction.³ The boundary between Spanish Texas and Louisiana was in dispute with the Calcasieu, or Rio Hondo, and the Sabine, representing the rival contentions of Spain and the

* Master's thesis in History, Louisiana State University, 1935.

¹ Perrin, W. H., *Southwest Louisiana*, 119.

² *Ibid.*

³ Fortier, Alcée, *Louisiana*, I, 147.

United States. In 1806 General Wilkinson and the Spanish General Herrera entered into an agreement which neutralized this territory, pending official settlement. This country soon filled up with desperadoes from the eastern states until it became a notorious refuge for outlaws, and for fourteen years this section had no effective government and was spoken of as "No Man's Land".⁴

Early settlers sought the unoccupied lands, covered with magnificent forest, where they could build homes. Many of them brought their families, and despite the lawlessness which prevailed in the neutral strip, they cast their lot here, and with a few primitive tools erected houses and cleared land for the cultivation of crops. A few brought their slaves, but as a rule the pioneers were people of small means and had to depend on themselves for their labor. Practically the entire neutral strip was given out in Spanish grants, but some were of doubtful legality. The Spaniards very generously gave lands to persons who had rendered military or other services to the king. But these grants were not approved by the United States until after abundant proof of their legality had been furnished. One method of establishing a Spanish claim consisted of the claimant pulling grass or digging holes in the ground. Many tracts of land included in these grants were occupied by settlers who built homes and reared families on them long before a valid title was established. In the course of time many thousand acres reverted to the government and came into the possession of settlers under the homestead laws.⁵ A large number of these first immigrants settled on what was known as Rio Hondo lands, the original title to which was based on a Spanish grant.

Some of the early settlers were Charles Sallier, for whom Lake Charles was named; Jacob Ryan; Reese Perkins, who settled on the east side of the river; others who settled on the west side of the river were Hiram Ours, Dempsy Iles, and Elias Blount.⁶

The earliest written account that we find is: "Rio Hondo claims 280." The report is dated November 1, 1824, and was communicated to the Senate January 31, 1825. The claims were along the bayous from Natchitoches to Hackberry, but the date when they were settled is unknown.⁷

⁴ Belisle, John G., *History of Sabine Parish, Louisiana*, 89.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁶ Fortier, *op. cit.*, I, 147.

⁷ *American State Papers, Public Lands*, II, 844.

Several questions were asked and answered concerning this land, among them being, "What were the limits of the late neutral territory as considered by the ancient authorities of Texas and Louisiana?"

Answer of Samuel Davenport: "The neutral ground comprehended all the tract of country lying east of the Sabine River and west of Culeashue, Bayou Kisachey, the branch of the Red River from the Kisachey up to the mouth of Bayou Don Manuel, Lake Terre Noir and Aroya Honda and south of the northeast boundary of the state of Louisiana."

Answer of Joseph Mora: "I have no other knowlege of the neutral ground as to boundaries but from the Rio Hondo to Sabine River."

Answer of Gregoir Mora: "In the year 1794 and 1795, I collected the titles of all the inhabitants who lived or had stock west of the Calcasieu River, of Bayou Kisachey or Bayou Manuel and Rio Hondo and south of Red River, which were at that time within the jurisdiction of Nacodoches and on the line of Providence of Louisiana."⁸

In these reports it is interesting to note the various spellings of the name Calcasieu: Culkeshue, Culcashue, Quelqueshue, Culeashue, Caleashue.

Rio Hondo lost its original Indian name and acquired that of Quelqueshue, which was later simplified to Calcasieu. Tradition says that Calcasieu is also an Indian word meaning "deep river".⁹ An authority on philology states that the river was named for an Attakapas Indian chief, Katkosh Yok (Crying Eagle), which was later given a French form.¹⁰ A questionable story related that certain men assembled to change the name of Rio Hondo, reached an impasse, and finally a Frenchman, who was tired of discussing the subject, suggested: "Oh, name it Quelquechose," which means "anything" or "something" in French. An unorthographic Irishman at the meeting wrote "Caleasieu".¹¹

The name of Jean Laffite, the famous smuggler, is closely connected with the early history of Calcasieu Parish, and forms one of its romantic pages. There is not a river or lake in this

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*, IV, 142.

¹⁰ Read, W. A., *Louisiana Place-Names of Indian Origin*, 15.

¹¹ Interview with Mrs. Rosteet, November, 1933.

section but has its thrilling story of mysterious visits of this sea rover. The river and its chain of lakes became Lafitte's stronghold. His vessels sailed swiftly up the deep river and silent bayous beyond sparsely settled districts where, hid from the eye of the law, they discharged their cargoes of jewels and Spanish gold.

As these early settlers of Calcasieu were looking for places where political troubles were unknown, most of the selected claims lay some distance from the water's edge. However, one settler, Charles Sallier, settled on a place on the shell bank where the first landing was made. After obtaining this land from the Indians, he built a house which remained until 1841, when it was removed to its present site, and the Barbé house was erected in its stead.

For several years nothing of interest happened to these settlers, but one day a thrill of excitement was felt by Charles Sallier. A strange clipper-built schooner carrying an enormous spread of canvas and several brass cannon sailed up the river and dropped anchor in the lake. Two men left the boat and went to Sallier's house. One of them, tall, dark, and very distinguished looking, made arrangements for a daily supply of fresh meat and vegetables. After their arrangements were made, the commander brought wines and candies to his host. These settlers enjoyed the hospitality of the captain. He entertained them frequently while his boat was at Shell Bank. This was the first appearance of Jean Lafitte in Calcasieu; afterwards he became a great friend of the people, and as the years passed he would return at irregular intervals and remain for weeks, should the United States war vessels be patrolling the coast. This pirate had many narrow escapes and suddenly set sail and was heard of no more in this locality. The deep, silent Calcasieu and its tributaries hold the secrets of Lafitte.¹²

When the first permanent Anglo-Saxon settler established a home west of the Calcasieu, the eight parishes comprising the seventh congressional district were known as St. Landry. The parish seat was at Opelousas, and all the territory between the Sabine and Opelousas was either a wilderness or an open prairie. There were many Indians, but they gave the settlers very little trouble. There were known to be four villages—one just south of Sugartown, near the house of G. J. Young; one just north of

¹² *Lake Charles American Press*, June 25, 1911. Article by Mrs. T. H. Mandell.

the W. B. Welborn home; one near the mouth of the Anacoco; and one on the Frazar farm at Merryville, just across the road from the present Merryville High School.¹³

Of those settlers who came here to make their homes and who now have descendants in the parish, tradition says that Saddler Johnson was among the first. Being a saddler by trade, he was called Saddler Johnson. He built a shack on the bluff of Whiskey-Chitto Creek.¹⁴

Tradition says that the first permanent Anglo-Saxon settlement west of Calcasieu River was made in the vicinity of Sugartown about 1825. The next settlement was made in what is known as Big Woods settlement, by the Smarts, Perkins, Cowards, and others about 1832.

This parish, like most of the others in southwest Louisiana, has a mixed population, consisting of Creoles, Acadians, Americans from half a dozen or more different states, and a few Indians.¹⁵ Among the Indians in the region, from an unknown origin, has sprung a race of people of mixed ancestry, known as Red Bones.¹⁶ They are generally believed to be a mixture of white, Indian, and Negro. Martin "Pop" Ryan, a pioneer settler, told his niece, Annie Ryan, that Red Bones near his mill on Prien Lake never mingled with nor married Negroes. He believed they were descendants of early Spanish and Indians of the Southwest. Bristow Hutchins, another old settler, said their bones were blood-red instead of white after death hence the name.¹⁷

The few settlers were spread over a large section of country and found it inconvenient, on account of long distance, roads and means of travel, to go to Opelousas, the parish seat, to attend court and to vote. For these reasons they determined upon the formation of a parish of their own, and with this end in view submitted to the legislature an act to create a new parish to be called Calcasieu. The act was adopted on March 24, 1840. Thus came into being the new parish of Calcasieu.

Section 1 of the act reads as follows: "That all territory in the Parish of St. Landry, within the following boundaries, to wit: commencing at the mouth of the River Mermentau, thence up said

¹³ *Ibid.*, November 4, 1931. Article by Robert Jones.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 123.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Interview with Miss Annie Ryan, December, 1934.

river to the mouth of Bayou Nez Pique, thence up said bayou to the mouth of Cedar Creek, thence due north to the dividing line between the Parishes of St. Landry and Rapides, thence along said line to the Sabine River, thence down the said river to the mouth, thence along the sea coast to the place of beginning, shall form and constitute the parish of Calcasieu."¹⁸

The police jury members of the new parish met at the residence of Arsene LeBleu on August 24, 1840, for the purpose of considering local affairs of the new parish and to pass such laws, ordinances, and regulations as would be most expedient for the good order of Calcasieu. James B. Wood was acting clerk, and the following were members of the police jury:¹⁹ First ward, David Simmons; second ward, Alexander Hebert; third ward, Michel Pithou; fourth ward, Henry Moss; fifth ward, Rees Perkins; sixth ward, Thomas Williams.

The parish embraces a total area of nearly 2,000,000 acres; it is larger than either the state of Rhode Island or Delaware and larger than the Kingdom of Belgium.²⁰

The surface of the parish is partly covered with open plains, which make good grazing pasture for cattle, as they are covered nearly the entire year with grasses.²¹ Early Calcasieu was known as the cattle country. From the census reports of 1840, we see that it had 11,594 horses and mules, 13,577 cattle, 552 sheep and 5,564 swine.²²

Over two-thirds of this area is timber, mostly long-leaf yellow pine.²³ The northwest part of the parish is pine flats and pine hills; the eastern half is upland and prairie; some marsh land and cypress swamps are along the center of the southern boundary.²⁴ The following kinds of trees are found in Calcasieu: hickory, most of the oaks, two kinds of elms, ash, maple, magnolia, sassafras, bay, wild peach, rosebud, dogwood, pine, poplar, chinquapin, alder, chinaberry, willow, sweet or red gum, black gum, black jack, sand jack, beach, ironwood, persimmon, walnut, cherry, huckleberry, cypress, holly, sloe, and perhaps many others.²⁵

¹⁸ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 129-130.

¹⁹ Calcasieu Police Jury Minutes, 1841-1846, p. 1.

²⁰ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 120.

²¹ Fortier, *op. cit.*, I, 148.

²² *United States Census Report*, 1840, p. 245.

²³ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 132.

²⁴ Fortier, *op. cit.*, I, 148.

²⁵ *Lake Charles American Press*, November 8, 1906.

Although the soil is possibly not so fertile as that of some of Louisiana's other parishes, with proper drainage and cultivation it can be made to produce almost any kind of crops.²⁶ A complete analysis of the virgin prairie soil will show the value of the land; mechanical analysis: organic matter, 2.50 per cent; gravel, 50; coarse sand, 30; medium sand, 20; fine sand, 6.42; very fine sand, 33.36; silt, 50.40; clay, 6.002; total soluble salt, .54; combination calcium sulphate, 2.42; sodium chloride, 49.50; sodium carbonate, 3.11; potassium chloride, 3.11; calcium chloride, 19.03; magnesium chloride, 32.53. Fertilizer constituents are: humus, 6.26 per cent; potash, .494; phosphoric acid, .158; nitrogen, .115.²⁷ The dense woodlands have been transformed into fields for the cultivation of crops which will furnish food. In the *Census Report* of 1840 the vast majority of workers were included under the general heading, agriculture. There were 534.²⁸ The crops of greatest production were Indian corn, 16,670 bushels; potatoes, 6,387 bushels; rice, 200 pounds; cotton gathered, 45,600 pounds; and sugar, 6,000 pounds.

Calcasieu is a delightful place in which to live. It has the most even climate in the South, no winter blizzards nor long summers. The Gulf breeze in winter makes the climate warm and in summer most refreshing. The average temperature is from forty degrees to seventy degrees in winter, and eighty degrees to ninety-six degrees in summer.²⁹

The parish is covered by a network of tiny streams, all of which flow into the Calcasieu which empties into the Gulf of Mexico about fifty miles away. The large streams have interesting names and memorialize some incident or family in early Calcasieu history. Some of the principal streams are Calcasieu and Houston Rivers; Beckworth, Hickory, Whiskey-Chitto, Burdricks, Ten Miles, Six Miles, Barnes, Sugar and Dry creeks; Bayous Serpent, Schoupique, Dindle, Lacassine, and English. All of these except the Lacassine flow into the Calcasieu which furnishes an outlet to the Gulf of Mexico, flowing twelve miles west of the mouth of the Mermentau River into the sea by a mouth three hundred yards wide.³⁰ The longest branch of the Calcasieu River rises in the parish of Natchitoches, in thirty-one degrees and

²⁶ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 120.

²⁷ *Lake Charles American Press*, Special Edition, 1916.

²⁸ *United States Census Report*, 1840, p. 240.

²⁹ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 122.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 120.

thirty minutes north latitude, and very nearly south of the town of Natchitoches. Another short branch of the Calcasieu rises in the Prairie Llana Coucon and flows south about seventy-five miles and unites with the main stream in nearly a western direction from the Church of St. Landry in Opelousas. A third branch rises thirty-one degrees north latitude, runs south thirty miles and falls into the west side of the main river twenty miles below the second branch. These three branches make the Calcasieu River. There is a peculiarity perceivable in this river that distinguishes it from any other in Louisiana, or perhaps in the world. Its water with a very few exceptions enters from the right bank.³¹

Although the federal census had been taken in Louisiana since 1810, the first census that lists Calcasieu Parish as a single unit is in 1840. This census placed the total population at 2,057, which included slaves. There were 482 slaves, 226 free colored, and 1,349 whites.³²

The census report shows that only three men were listed as being employed in manufacturing, with only \$650 capital invested.³³ This proves that most of the manufacturing was done at home. The women carried on the spinning and weaving, and the men the work such as tanning leather, making wagons, etc.³⁴ The pioneer stores were very few. Census reports show that in 1840 Calcasieu had four retail, dry goods, grocery, and other stores.³⁵ These were not filled with ready-made clothing, as we have today, but the necessities of life such as calico, flour, salt, etc. In 1840 there were only two schools in the parish and the total number of twenty-eight pupils made up the attendance of both. There were one hundred and fifty-one illiterates. It is an indication of the quality of stock that peopled the area that there was only one person who could be listed under the heading of criminal or insane.³⁶

The first record book opened in the parish was in 1840, a very small book which contained all the transactions of the parish; only four deeds of land were listed.

³¹ Darby, William, *A Geographical Description of the State of Louisiana*, 151.

³² *United States Census Report*, 1840, pp. 61-62.

³³ *Ibid.*, 245.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 241.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Lake Charles American Press*, October 8, 1934.

The early houses in Calcasieu were constructed of pine logs. An excellent example of this is the old Barritine home near the DeRidder highway, built about 1840, parts of which can be seen today. It is built of round logs, notched at the ends to fit together, the spaces between being filled with mud and straw to keep out the wind and cold. The chimney was made of mud. An interesting feature was the "dog trot" through the center of the house, for the use of the dog in bad weather. It also provided a very cool place for the family to sit in warm weather.³⁷ This home is typical of the early ones built in this section.

There were no railroads in early Calcasieu; the chief trading posts were on the rivers. A great many of these early settlers went to market only once a year, and returned with supplies for the home. Schooners and ox-teams were the only means of transportation.

Rich, undeveloped resources of American life lay in this great imperial Calcasieu, and it was the work of the settlers to hasten their development.

CHAPTER II

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Calcasieu is a farmer's land. I use the word farmer to mean a man who lives by the soil—an independent, out-of-doors man, who turns the wealth of the soil into rice, corn, hay, or fruits. He is the one necessary man; he is the basis of industry, of society. Commerce, manufacture, and the growth of cities must rest upon the land for support.

Happiness is dependent upon success, and success in agriculture depends upon three things: climate, soil, and water; these three are nature's gifts to Calcasieu Parish.

Diversified Farming

The parish is adapted to diversified farming. This implies a rotation of, as well as a variety of, crops; and upon a judicious system of rotation largely depends the annual yield and the value of one's capital, which in this case is land.¹

³⁷ Miss Maude Reid's Scrap Book.

¹ Report of the State Department of Agriculture and Immigration, 1900-1901, p. 100.

In the early nineteenth century the Calcasieu farmer was satisfied with a small farm. The census report of 1840 shows 534 people classed under the general heading of agriculture. The leading crop of 1840 was corn—16,670 bushels were produced. Early Calcasieu was a cattle country; therefore, the production of corn was essential. In the following decade this crop showed a decided increase and was recorded in 1850 at 44,360 bushels. By 1860 the production of corn more than doubled (91,295 bushels). The shrinkage in agriculture occasioned by the Civil War is evident in the census report of 1870, when the amount of corn produced in Calcasieu was only 39,950 bushels. Following this, however, a steady increase in this crop is recorded, the production in 1910 reaching 315,576 bushels.

Although cotton was the leading crop of Louisiana, it did not play an important role in the agricultural history of Calcasieu, for only a small portion was entirely suitable for its production. The census report of 1840 records 111 bales. The ensuing decade showed a slight rise, but in the 1850's the production increased more than five-fold, reaching 640 bales in 1860. The reports of 1870 and 1880 record a steady but small decrease, but in 1890 the amount produced is listed at 1,152 bales, and thereafter a steady increase can be noted.

An industry that came into being with the advent of the railroad was that of market gardening. Early vegetables for northern markets could be grown successfully once the transportation problems had been solved. In 1870 the recorded value (in the census report) was only \$140 and in 1880, \$912. But with the laying of the railroad in the 1880's and the immigration of thrifty northerners, the value of market gardening, including small fruits, jumped to \$55,026 by 1890. By 1910 market gardening alone was \$325,724.

The value of Calcasieu orchard products in general was listed at \$75 in 1860. By 1900 this amount had increased to \$18,360. In the period immediately following (1901-1902) the Long-Bell Lumber Company undertook to transform 455 acres of cutover timber land from a nonproductive to a highly productive state. Within a few years the seemingly barren-looking piece of soil was turned into a veritable bower of fruit trees and was furnishing fruits and vegetables for a wide territory. The project was

located on a section of land between Bon Ami and De Ridder. On this farm were orange trees, fig orchards, peach and pecan orchards, plum trees, Japanese persimmons, and other fruits. By 1911 there were 34,000 growing fruit trees.²

Since 1899 there have been several small orange orchards started, all from the introduction of new varieties, more particularly the satsuma grafted on the trifoliata stock, claimed to give greater hardiness and resistance to low temperatures; also there were cultivated the sprouts that grew up from the stumps of the native trees which were of several varieties, without name, probably from the Mediterranean. The fruits of some are smaller than others and have thinner rinds and fewer seeds. The Louisiana orange is capable of withstanding a temperature as low as fifteen degrees above zero, provided the cold is preceded by weather that is cool enough and moist enough to season or prepare the tree for a rapid falling to a low temperature. Dr. A. J. Perkins stated that he planted the Jaffa, Besset Boone, Parson Brown, and Ruby in 1905, and by November of the following year he gathered oranges from some of these trees. Dr. Perkins had two thousand trees, the first of which were set out in March, 1905, and if successful in 1911, he expected to average \$3.00 per tree.³

The production of sugar cane has never been of outstanding importance in Calcasieu. In 1840, only 6 hogsheads of sugar were made, but by 1850 this amount had increased to 460 hogsheads, and 18,160 gallons of molasses. During the 1850's, which marked the hightide of cotton production before which all other products gave way, a decided decrease in sugar is to be noted, for only 34 hogsheads were refined in 1860, and 2,810 gallons of molasses were made. From this time on a steady decrease in the production of refined sugar is apparent, though the output of molasses increased until in 1910 it reached 114,163 gallons.

Tobacco production in Calcasieu showed very little growth. In 1860, 1,149 pounds were produced; in 1880, 2,910 pounds; in 1890, 160 pounds; in 1900, 4,750 pounds. This was used principally for home consumption.

² *Lake Charles American Press*, June 26, 1911.

³ *Ibid.*

Potatoes were produced early in the history of Calcasieu. By the time of the Civil War the amount produced (1860) was 42,940 bushels, of which the greater part was sweet potatoes. During the 1860's the production decreased, as it did in every other crop. The immigration of the northerners during the 1880's, however, marked a turning point in the potato industry, for experimenting in the production of Irish potatoes was begun, and by 1890 the combined production was listed at 171,795 bushels. In 1910 this amount had reached 315,576 bushels.

There are three reasons why diversified farming is profitable.⁴ First, it is the only plan that can stand the test of common sense and reason and is backed by actual results. Second, it is the only plan by which the fertility of the farm can be maintained or improved. Third, and most important of all, it is the only plan that really, truly, and in the full meaning of the term makes a home of a farm.

Rice

To all nations rice is the especial symbol of good luck and good fortune. From the lonely Oriental who sends his deceased relative to the shades equipped with a goodly supply of the cereal, to the guest at a fashionable occidental wedding who showers rice upon the presumably happy pair, all share in the belief that rice is a sign of good fortune. There is no mystery in the superstition of the Orientals regarding it; the success or failure of the crop means life or death to them.

The first attempt to raise rice was made in the Virginia colony about 1647, but the climate was not suitable. In 1694 an English vessel bound from Madagascar to Liverpool put into Charleston, South Carolina, for repairs. The captain presented a package of rough rice to the worthy resident, Thomas Smith, suggesting that the seed might be successfully grown in the Carolinas. Smith planted it in his garden, cultivated it, and from this crop sprang an industry that has flourished in the Carolinas and Georgia for more than two hundred years. By 1839 the cultivation of rice was rather widely distributed throughout the United States, but the states of Georgia, the Carolinas, and Loui-

⁴ *Report of the State Department of Agriculture and Immigration, 1900-1901*, p. 103.

siana were the important producing states.⁵ In the years from 1845 to 1860, the states of North and South Carolina and Georgia were at their highest point of production, and after the Civil War these states began to decrease in production; the new areas in the West, particularly in Louisiana, supplanted them in importance.⁶

The rice planter was usually a middle-class farmer. He was a man of little wealth and little education. Because of lack of funds he was not able to install sufficient machinery for the cultivation of rice or properly to prepare it for market.

Rice planting began in February by digging new ditches or cleaning out old ones. A river-front farm, usually consisting of four acres, would have one ditch four feet wide and five feet deep running from the river to the swamp. A dam or gate at the rear was placed at right angles with the ditch in order that the flow could be controlled. Back of the field a four- or five-foot ditch ran parallel with the river and a high bank on the outside completely inclosed the field. A floodgate opened behind it to regulate the height of the water.⁷

In March oxen were used to plow the soil, which was mixed and leveled. From the middle of March to the end of April, planting was done. The broadcast method was used by many and was very simple. The seeds were either broadcast or sown in trenches. The seeds were lightly covered. An outer gate in the trunk ditch was opened when the planting was completed, which allowed the next rise of the tide to fill the ditch and finally to cover the field. The first flow of the water was called the sprout flow. The water was left on until the seed sprouted. Then the water was drawn off. The point flow followed this, and was left on the points until the rice was three or four inches in height. The water protected the rice from grass and rice birds. As soon as the ground was dry enough, it was hoed. Then the long flow remained on the rice for about a month. After the water was drained it had another hoeing. The water was again let on for the long flow and left until time to harvest.

⁵ *DeBow's Review*, I (1846), 324.

⁶ Ginn, Mildred K., "A History of Rice Production in Louisiana to 1896" (M. A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1930), 10.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 15.

The harvesting began in September. The rice was cut with a sickle. One person could cut three or four rows at a time. Within a few days after cutting, it had dried and was bound in sheaves and carried to the stackyard where the sheaves were ricked.⁸ When the harvesting had been completed, the threshing began. This was done by tossing the rice in the air or by fanning it. The husks were removed by pounding the grains in a mortar with a light wood pestle.

We can see that this early method of planting and harvesting was very crude. The cultivation of rice by the majority of planters up to the Civil War was for domestic use. But the real birth of the industry may be said to date from 1884 when a colony of sturdy farmers from the Middle West, disheartened by the successive crop failures, and tired of the interminable, rigorous winters of the North, migrated to the prairies of southwest Louisiana. Prior to this the cultivation of rice had been confined to the alluvial and delta lands of the state. When these western farmers came to Louisiana, they found the natives growing rice in low spots where irrigation was more simply done, and the crop depended upon local rainfall for irrigation.

Among the northern immigrants that came was S. L. Cary of Iowa. Passing through Louisiana, he became impressed with the country, as it reminded him of Iowa. To his surprise he found cattle grazing on winter grass in a delightful climate. At this time there was a quantity of government land, and realizing the possibilities of rice culture he went to New Orleans to locate a homestead. Being successful, he returned to Jennings, and immediately wrote for his friends to come to this state. For several years he went North and each time returned with parties of farmers from Iowa and Illinois.⁹

An old settler of Jennings, Mr. McFarland, suggested to Cary that of all crops raised on the prairies, rice brought the best return. After experimenting Cary found this to be true. He found that it took an adequate and regular supply of water. One of his friends, Maurice Byrne of Iowa, introduced the first twine binder that was ever used in rice cultivation in Louisiana.¹⁰

⁸ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 35.

Immigration opened the eyes of the old residents of Calcasieu and they began to participate in the agricultural development. These immigrants, fresh from the western wheat farms, could not be expected to tolerate a continuation of the old Calcasieu methods—the hand method of sowing must be superseded by the modern drill; the primitive sickle by the binder. Ancient methods of threshing, such as the pounding of the grain with a club and whipping it over a barrel, were replaced by the modern steam thresher, and such old-time methods of milling as tramping the rice out by horse, by a steam mill. This, indeed, was a revolution, and the native population, strong in its inherent prejudice against conditions that were foreign to it, viewed with pessimism the dawn of the new era in the industry.

The next great era, beyond question the most important in the history of the rice industry, dates from 1896, the year in which the irrigation canal was introduced by the Abbott brothers who have been a potent factor in the development of southwest Louisiana. Rice culture with the exception of the irrigation feature differs very little from the cultivation of wheat or any other of the staple crops. Although it is thought by many that rice is grown in swampy lands, this is untrue; the lands of Calcasieu are rolling prairies, from six to twenty feet above the level of the streams.¹¹

Unromantic figures can best relate the story of the marvelous growth of industry since the introduction of the irrigation canals. In 1897, there was only one plant within less than ten miles of the canal. Seven years later there were no less than eighty plants in operation, each capable of irrigating from 160 to 20,000 acres. During the same period the number of binders had been increased from 3,000 to 10,000, while the annual crop had grown from 3,000,000 to 10,000,000 bushels, with a value to those engaged in it of over ten million dollars.

Most of the big canal companies have for their primary object the irrigation of their own lands or the lands of some other big rice-growing corporation, although every company is willing to supply water to smaller growers. This was generally arranged on a basis of one-fifth of the crop.

¹¹ *Lake Charles American Press*, November 9, 1916.

At the pumping plant of the company the water is lifted to an elevation of about twenty feet by a number of pumps, the largest of which has a discharge pipe forty-nine inches in diameter, with a capacity of lifting from sixty to eighty thousand gallons per minute. The power is furnished by a battery of large water tube boilers, driving two twin-cylinder engines of from five to eight hundred horsepower capacity.

The canal company has its own storage tanks, using crude oil for the fuel, which is carried in its own barges from the pipe line direct to the pumping plant. The water is lifted from the bayou into a flume about thirty feet wide and six feet deep and 140 feet long, built of the highest grade of cypress lumber in a substantial manner. The water then flows into the main canal and is distributed through its various laterals and channels to the growing rice, the main canal carrying from eight to fifteen feet of water from 100 to 150 feet in width, serving as a reservoir to furnish water for several days in the event the pumps are not continuously operated. This was an appreciated advantage to the farmers, not possible in a small canal system.¹²

This was an era of machinery in rice milling. The primitive methods of pestle and mortar were first improved by making a rice receptacle out of a hollow log. The light wood pestle was replaced by a heavy wooden pounder bound to a horizontal beam six to eight feet long resting on a fulcrum four to five feet from the pounder. It was raised by stepping on the short end of the beam and then releasing the foot. The next improvement was an "overshot wheel" which was attached to a horizontal shaft with arms separated by a distance equal to the length of the rice pounder.¹³ Such a large increase in rice production necessitated a parallel extension of milling capacity. The crude mills were replaced by improved ones.

The rice production of Calcasieu Parish increased from 200 pounds in 1840 to 164,464,480 pounds in 1910, the greatest increase coming after 1880. Acreage increase has been tremendous also: 1880—600 acres; 1890—8,665; 1900—44,321; 1910—141,500.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Ginn, *op. cit.*, 40.

With such growth in production of rice, we see the need of rice mills. Of the early mills, Jacob Ryan in the middle 'seventies had a crude one where the townspeople had their rice milled. It is said that he had very little business, because each family had its own mortar and pestle.¹⁴ In 1888 Thomas Hanson built a rice mill in connection with his shingle mill on the eastern shore of Lake Charles, north of Pujo Street. Captain Hanson advertised in the August issue of the *Echo*, 1888, "that he had just completed his rice mill and was ready to serve the public."¹⁵ In December, 1892, C. B. Lake and Company built a rice mill at West Lake.¹⁶ On January 26, 1892, the Lake Charles Rice Milling Company, a company of New York capitalists, was chartered and built a mill in Lake Charles in 1893, on the banks of the Calcasieu River. The Lake Charles Board of Trade paid C. A. John \$10,000 for locating the mill in Lake Charles.¹⁷ Gustave A. John of New York City was president of the first Lake Charles Rice Milling Company. In 1905 the officers were Christian M. Meyer, president; John Henry Dick, vice-president; Bernard Suydan, secretary; all were from New York. The manager was R. S. Russell. J. Alton Foster was manager of the clean rice department and Leon Viterbo was buyer of rough rice.

When Mr. John opened his rice mill in 1893, it was freely predicted that he would fail; he did not have enough rice to run the mill a week. But he persisted, and in time canals began to creep across the prairie lands, more and more rice was planted for commercial purposes, and soon it was demonstrated that nowhere in the world was southwest Louisiana surpassed for growing rice. This Lake Charles rice mill was said to be the largest in the United States.

In 1911 the Lake Charles Rice Mill employed sixty people, with Mr. J. A. Foster serving as general manager and treasurer, and \$20,000 annually distributed in the parish in wages. The mill handled 200,000 sacks of rice, each sack containing 200 pounds. The milling plant had a daily capacity of 3,500 barrels of rice, and utilized 120,000 square feet of floor space. Their warehouse had a storage capacity of 150,000 sacks of rough rice

¹⁴ A. M. Mayo files.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

and 25,000 sacks of cleaned rice. A carload of rice bran, a carload of ground rice hulls, and a half carload of rice polish were manufactured every day that the mill operated.¹⁸

In 1898 the Wall Rice Mill was erected, and in 1911 the Louisiana State Rice Milling Company purchased it. This mill had a capacity of 1,200 barrels of rough rice every twenty-four hours. Some of the brands milled were Honduras, Louisiana Pearl, Jan, Edith, and Blue Rose.¹⁹

To visit a modern rice mill is a unique experience. The rice is received at the mill warehouse in sacks weighing about 180 pounds each, which are unloaded from the cars by belt-conveying machinery of a character somewhat similar to that employed in the grain elevators of the West. From the bins the rice is run through separators, which remove all foreign substance from it. It is then fed into the center of the hulling stones, where it is revolved at the rate of 250 revolutions a minute and, through centrifugal action, through the perforated ends of the upper and lower stones, a process which removes the hull from the grain. From these the rice is passed through the fanning machines, which remove the hull by suction. A very ingenious German separator then turns back the unhulled grains to another set of stones, for about twenty-five per cent of the rice that goes through the initial set of stones comes out unhulled. The rice is then passed through hullers. The huller is a cylinder within a metal case, the rice going in at one end and coming out at the other. This removes the oily cuticle that covers the grain, this by-product being known as rice bran. From here the rice goes to what are known as the brushes. The brushes are upright cylinders covered with leather, which polish the rice against a wire screen, leaving behind a white powder known as rice polish. From the brushes the rice goes to the polishing drum, where through friction the highly polished appearance which is found in nearly all finished rice is obtained. From there the rice goes to the clean rice separator, where the broken grains are separated from the whole, and the various commercial grades are separately packed.²⁰

¹⁸ *Journal of Southwest Louisiana*, 1911.

¹⁹ *Lake Charles American Press*, Special Edition, 1916.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Farmers' Organizations

The Department of Agriculture has inaugurated and conducts a system of farmers' institutes in Louisiana, which are of inestimable value. At these institutes, specialists in agriculture come in personal contact with the farmers, delivering lectures, asking questions, and having them answered, interchanging ideas, all of which bring out the most practical and needed agricultural information.

The farmers of Calcasieu took advantage of the opportunity and the Agricultural Society of Southwest Louisiana was formed in December, 1896, with its domicile in Jennings.²¹ The first meeting embraced many agricultural questions and the discussions were full of interest and information. In reading through their reports we find that the farmers of southwest Louisiana have good attendance, and these meetings are held regularly at Jennings on June 27, and at Lake Charles on July 11 of each year.²²

Different societies were organized through the efforts of the Department of Farmers' Institute. The Fruit Growers' Association was formed in 1897,²³ and the Southwest Louisiana Fair Association was also organized the same year.²⁴ The Jennings Rice Planters Association was organized in 1902.²⁵

The Calcasieu Parish Fruit and Truck Growers Association was formed during the early part of 1910 to meet the growing demands and to combine their products and sell in carlots to the best advantage. The organization is purely mutual in its nature, and is run by the farmers. Its officers were selected with the thought of getting men who had a personal interest in its success, and who were willing to give some time for their own benefit and for the benefit of other members without hope of direct remuneration. Bern M. Foster, manager of the Orange Land Company, Ltd., one of the largest land companies in the parish, and himself a truck grower, was elected president; W. E. Cline, vice-president; R. L. Coleman, treasurer; Dr. A. J. Perkins, Professor Alexander Thomason, George Linkswiler, and A. G. Barrett were on the board of managers. Branches of the asso-

²¹ *Report of the State Department of Agriculture and Immigration*, 1896, pp. 405-406.

²² *Ibid.*, 1896-1910.

²³ *Ibid.*, December, 1897, p. 526.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 1902, p. 181

ciation have been organized in nearly all parts of the parish, the Oakdale branch alone shipping out several carloads by truck. Car shipments have gone from Singer, Edgerly, Lake Arthur, Manchester, and Lake Charles. With Calcasieu soil and climate and progressive men like those of the Fruit and Truck Growers Association, the Parish will soon have a record not to be surpassed.²⁶

CHAPTER III

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Calcasieu was a broad, unbroken prairie, dotted here and there with droves of wild cattle, and miles and miles of deep, quiet forests. The early roads were marked out from settlement to settlement by "blazes" on the nearest trees, and they followed the line of least resistance.

With so many streams of water—river, bayou, and creek—the small boat was used as a means of transportation.

By the nineteenth century, travel across the coast region was constantly increasing. The natural, usually adopted, route would be along the coast line as had been the practice since very early times. This, however, was impossible; the continuous succession of bayous, lakes, inlets and swamps forbade it.

Constantly searching for the shortest possible way that would still keep them on reasonably dry land, they finally by common consent and practice settled upon a regular way and that path became known as the "Old Spanish Trail." There were almost innumerable cutoffs and detours, some of them bearing the local name, but the "trail" became fixed. Growing settlement and business in what afterwards became Texas increased the traffic greatly. Lone adventurers, companies of merchants, immigrants, troops of soldiers, all made the trail busier. Then the Texas cattle industry got into the hands of active people. They must get to New Orleans with their products. People still living in Lake Charles tell of seeing herds of thousands of head of long-horns passing north of the lake on east to market.

Being originally a traditional cowpath, the trail was crooked. The coming of farms straightened it out in places, in some places substituted square corners for curves, and, in still other places,

²⁶ *Lake Charles American Press*, June 28, 1911.

entirely obliterated them; but the trail and the track can still be seen—the broad, beaten ground where animal and human feet left their trace.

Long years afterwards came the state and government engineers who sought the best possible route for a great coast-to-coast highway, which happily retains the old name. It is a real compliment to the wisdom of those stout old pioneers who blazed the original trail to observe how closely those engineers followed the old trace.

By an old map made by engineers of the surveyor general's office in 1830, the first official map of this region, the trail entered Calcasieu Parish from about two miles northeast of Iowa; thence west with a slight sweep to the north, it curves southward again and crosses English Bayou near Chloe. Passing directly through the village, it swings southward about three-quarters of a mile and then in a straight line westward to the point where Ryan Street, Lake Charles, now crosses the Southern Pacific Railway tracks. Then from this crossing of Ryan Street, it went slightly northward to the bank of the river, which it followed to the curve of the river to the north, around the big sweeping bend, and thence directly northwest to the crossing of the Calcasieu where Hortman's Ferry was afterwards operated for many years, and where rests on the west bank the cluster of homes now called Bagdad. From the river crossing it extended northwest to near the Houston River, just south of the present Kansas City Southern Railway. It followed the south side of the Houston River about ten miles to nearly north of Edgerly and thence just north of Edgerly to Vinton in a general southwesterly direction to Niblett's Bluff on Old River. That long, swinging curve over to the north, instead of going straight across the pretty level prairie, was not thoughtless, as it may seem. On a long trail the first and most vital need is for wood and water. This beautiful Houston River furnished both; that accounts for the apparently useless detour.

At the crossing of the Calcasieu, after the city of Lake Charles began to grow up, a ferry was maintained directly across the lake from the foot of Pujo Street to West Lake. It was called Ferry's Wharf.

Upon reaching Old River at Niblett's Bluff, the trail passed southward along Old River, over Beefridge and Bone Hill, to the head of Big Bayou, where boats and barges were used to cross

the Sabine, where the traveler landed on Texas soil. Those two names, Beefridge and Bone Hill, tell of the coming of the immense herds of Texas cattle which passed that way until diverted farther north to avoid the use of the boats.

Still long years afterwards, when the state and federal engineers were seeking the most economical route for a great national highway, they kept just south of the Old Spanish Trail, passed through Lake Charles by way of Broad Street and over Shell Beach Drive south of the lake, across Calcasieu River and thence west. Near Edgerly they swerved southwestward to avoid building an extra bridge over Old River.¹

Because of its age the Old Spanish Trail naturally passes through the oldest established neighborhoods, past old villages and towns, by old homes, trees, churches, and other long-established places. For many years it has lain there like an extended magnet, drawing settlements and advancements by the attraction of the human presence. It is an established institution, but not a gaudy one.

Calcasieu Parish was created March 24, 1840, and in the police jury records for 1857 we see that its people were interested in good roads. The following will show this: "Every free white male citizen and able negro who has been a resident of the parish for ten days, between the ages of 16 and 45, shall be subject to road duty."² A fine of \$1.00 to \$2.00 a day was imposed for failure to report when called by the overseer or his agent.

In 1862, when the federal troops captured New Orleans and blockaded the mouth of the Mississippi, Taylor's army, then in central Louisiana, retreated from Banks' army and it became necessary to furnish them with provisions and ammunition. For this purpose a military road was hastily cut through the pines and hardwood thickets from Niblett's Bluff to Alexandria. The establishment of this road, over which many heroic Texas men marched, belongs in one of the most fascinating chapters of the twin stories of southeastern Texas and southwestern Louisiana.

The Confederate government was assisted by the following men in constructing the military road: Rev. William Perkins of Big Woods, Alexander Frazar of Merryville, and W. J. Slayden of Singer. They were to complete it from Niblett's Bluff to Sugar-

¹ *Lake Charles American Press*, June 29, 1932.

² Calcasieu Parish Police Jury Records, March, 1857.

town, where another crew would take charge. The various sections of the road were built largely by soldiers and by what few slaves there were in the immediate territory. Among one of the crews was Iron Davis, an uncle of C. C. Davis, former mayor of De Ridder.³

Dr. John Cooper, president of the police jury in 1916, said that as far as he was able to learn about the first public road was laid in this parish in 1887, and it passed through the town of Welsh from north to south. Since then the question of roads has been one that has interested the people of Calcasieu continuously.

In 1911 there were 175 miles of improved roads comprised in the highway system. The construction of these highways has done much to stimulate interest in road matters in the parish. The taxpayers have been given an object lesson in what can be accomplished by the proper expenditure of money, and have shown plainly that they will not permit public officials to go back to the old methods that were in vogue before the voting of the good roads bond issue.

The first step after voting the road bond issue was to secure the services of a government engineer to map out the system, and make recommendations as to materials and methods. C. H. Sweetser, senior engineer in the office of public roads, was given leave of absence by the government, and spent over a year in Calcasieu Parish.

The road system as it is constituted at present follows very closely the plan made by Mr. Sweetser. Only a few minor changes in route were made by the police jury. After the adoption of the plans, Mr. Sweetser was retained at a salary of \$4,000 a year until his leave of absence had expired. By this time the work of construction was well under way.

Following the return of Mr. Sweetser to Washington, Fred Shutts, for a couple of years parish supervisor, was placed in charge of the road work.⁴

The creation of a permanent highway department assured the taxpayers that all money would be spent without waste. With this assurance the taxpayers did not hesitate to vote more money for roads whenever they were needed.

³ *Beaumont Enterprise*, January 25, 1930.

⁴ *Lake Charles American Press*, June 28, 1911.

Railroads

Work began on a railroad bed in Calcasieu Parish, now occupied by the Southern Pacific Railroad, as early as 1867, but was discontinued for a time. In 1878 work was resumed,⁵ and the people of Lake Charles were very much excited over the great achievements being made. In the *Echo*, July, 1879, we find the following:

Our dreams are coming true! We have a locomotive in Lake Charles which means of course, that we have a railroad for it to run on. To be sure it is only a little piece of railroad as yet, but work is progressing on it slowly but surely.

Captain Tom Reynolds has delivered at the railroad docks here 650 tons of steel rails brought from New York. There have been 100 piles driven in the Calcasieu River for the railroad bridge.

The name of the locomotive is Calcasieu No. I. The road will be called the Louisiana Western Railway.⁶

Until this Louisiana railroad was built, Calcasieu was without railroads. When the lumbermen from the North came in and sawmills developed, it was necessary to have other roads and the St. Louis, Watkins, and Gulf Railroad was built. It is known now as the Southern Pacific Railroad and was in operation in 1893.

In 1899 the Kansas City, Pittsburg, and Gulf Railroad, now the Kansas City Southern, was put into operation.

In January, 1903, construction was begun on the Lake Arthur branch of the Southern Pacific, and operations to Hayes began August 15, 1903. Service from Hayes to Lake Arthur began December 29, 1903.

In October, 1903, construction was begun on the Lake Charles Northern Railroad, another branch of the Southern Pacific system. On October 25, 1905, trains were operated from Lake Charles to Fullerton. The railroad from De Ridder to Fullerton was in operation in February, 1908.⁷

Because of the unsurpassed railroad facilities in 1910, Calcasieu was in close touch with all of the great commercial and

⁵ Interview with A. M. Mayo, February, 1935.

⁶ *Echo* (Lake Charles), July 2, 1879.

⁷ Interview with A. M. Mayo, February, 1935.

industrial centers of the country. The Southern Pacific was a great system, whose ramifications extended from the Mississippi River to all parts of the Pacific Coast country, with lateral lines extending south through Mexico, and north through connections to all parts of the great West. On the east this line made direct connections with all lines leading out of New Orleans to the Great Lakes and Atlantic seaboard states, thereby furnishing the people of this section with transportation for their products to the principal markets of the United States.

The Kansas City Southern Railroad furnished this section with direct service to Kansas City and to lines operating from that point.

The St. Louis, Watkins and Gulf Railroad tapped one of the richest lumber sections in the world, and gave Calcasieu an opportunity to reach the markets in the central portion of Louisiana.⁸

Water Transportation

Prior to the coming of the Louisiana Western Railroad, Calcasieu was dependent upon water transportation. The principal stream was the Calcasieu River, rising in the northern portion of Vernon Parish, entering the northeastern portion of Calcasieu Parish, thence flowing in a southwesterly course to Lake Charles, thence nearly south into the Gulf of Mexico. Its main tributaries are its West Fork and Barnes Creek, and these in turn are fed by numerous streams rising in and running through the pine woods; chief among these are the Houston River, Hickory branch, Buxton's, Beckwith, Whiskey-Chitto, Clear, Dry, Six Miles, and Ten Mile creeks. The Calcasieu River flows through and along the edges of several lakes, one of which is Lake Charles, nearly circular in form, about two miles in diameter; and one is Big Lake, over a mile wide and about eighteen miles long.⁹

Most of the towns were located on the water's edge, namely, Lake Charles, Marion, Bagdad, Rose Bluff, etc. In the early days the schooner played an important part in transportation. We have early stories of Jean Lafitte's visits and descriptions of his vessel on the Calcasieu.

⁸ *Lake Charles' Commercial and Industrial Advantages* (pamphlet issued by the Southern Pacific Railroad, 1910).

⁹ *Ibid.*

During the Civil War Captain Goos of Lake Charles was engaged in the lumber business and had a great supply of schooners. After the federal blockade became effective, the Goos schooners were converted into blockade-runners. These schooners took out lumber and brought back flour, coffee, clothing, etc.

The ferryboats were helpful in transportation. In the police jury records for 1840 we find a ferry grant to Barry and Gay.¹⁰ The transportation charges were:

Man or horse.....	\$.75
Oxcart or large horse wagon.....	1.50
Every gig or one-horse cart.....	1.00
Swimming stock.....	.04 per head

Numerous ferry grants of this nature were recorded with varying rates but with the strictest provisions.

An interesting ferryboat was the *Evangeline*. It came in 1884 and ran between Lake Charles and West Lake. Such ferryboats were indispensable to the citizens in their intercourse, as few bridges were erected in these early days.

The *Evangeline* was succeeded by the *Hazel* in June, 1888. The latter was owned by Captain A. W. Wehrt. This steamer was the largest boat upon the Calcasieu. It was a well-built, double-hull craft, eighty-nine feet long, with a thirty-seven foot beam, and had two cabins and a lower and upper deck. This steamer was well equipped for the transportation of heavy and package freight.¹¹ It ran until it was replaced by the river bridge in 1916. The boat was sold and taken to Baton Rouge for the river ferry service.

A man whose thoughts first centered on an inland waterway (the Intercoastal Canal) from the Atlantic to the Gulf of Mexico was Leon Locke of Lake Charles. One of the means by which the

¹⁰ Calcasieu Police Jury Records, September 14, 1840.

¹¹ *Lake Charles' Commercial and Industrial Advantages*, 1910.

Intercoastal Canal has become a canal of real water and real navigability has been the annual convention of the Interstate Water Way League of Louisiana and Texas.

The first convention at which the league was organized was held in the old Opera House in Lake Charles in May, 1906. This league was a very active and efficient organization and will continue as such until a canal is complete. They are fighting for river development, wharf construction and everything that will tend to bring the commerce back to the waterways, making them an adjunct to rail service and regulation of freight charges.¹²

Telegraph and Telephone

The first telegraph office in Lake Charles was the Western Union in 1870, located on the south street then called Broadway. The operator was A. E. Work. In 1872 Edward Vonege was an operator, and in 1879 he moved the office to the building on the west side of Bilbo Street, just south of Huber Motor Company. The old building is still standing.¹³ Since this time the telegraph business had made steady progress and the people of Calcasieu feel that it is a big business factor in their midst.

On February 9, 1884, the Lake Charles *Echo* said:

Telephone installation was discussed at a meeting of our town people. William Myer has acquired from the patentees of the telephone apparatus the exclusive privilege in all parts of Calcasieu Parish. He is now at work and early next week telephone messages can be exchanged between his drug store, at the corner of Ryan and Pujo Streets, and A. Rigmaiden's store at the railroad depot. All communication by the telephone will cost only ten cents to talk five minutes. The telephone apparatus has been in use in America about ten years, but this is the first opportunity that most of the inhabitants of our town have had to use it. It will no doubt prove a great convenience.¹⁴

For a number of years this was the only telephone system the town had and was known as the Great Southern Telephone Company.

¹² *Lake Charles American Press*, June 28, 1916.

¹³ Interview with A. M. Mayo

¹⁴ *Echo* (Lake Charles), February 9, 1884.

In 1881 Lock-More and Company advertised in the *Echo* that the company telephones had connection with Mr. Meyers' drug store in Lake Charles and could be reached through that medium, if one did not care to come to Lockport.

In November, 1891, the franchise granting the Great Southern Telephone Company the right to operate in Calcasieu was extended, and since that time this company has been of service.

The minutes of the city council for March 25, 1895, while Pat Crowley was mayor, state that permission was given to Elly Dees to erect telephone and telegraph lines for the purpose of conveying intelligences by electricity. The office was in Lake Charles in a small cottage in the rear of Mr. Dees' home, on the southeast corner of Hodges and Division streets. The telephone office faced Division Street and the telephone girl, the first in town, was Sudie Reynolds, a very popular girl of the nineties.¹⁵

The Cumberland Telephone and Telegraph Company are at present holders of the franchise and the successor of the original company.¹⁶ In 1907 eight hundred phones were in use—in 1912 over two thousand. Calcasieu is destined to be one of the big links in the chain of the Cumberland business.

There were no communication facilities between the years 1830 and 1870; hence all the settlers on the west side of the parish got their mail at Belgrade. Belgrade was a steamboat landing on the Texas side of the Sabine River about fifteen miles below Merryville. Those in the western part of the heavily pined parish received their mail either at Opelousas or Alexandria, though at most there was little mail in those times.

Robert Jones says that a star mail route was established from Lake Charles to Petersburg by way of Sugartown during the year 1841. This mail came weekly. It required three days for the mail rider to reach Petersburg and three to return.¹⁷

With the development of towns, Calcasieu's communication facilities began to grow. Some of the post offices were small

¹⁵ Miss Maude Reid's Scrap Book.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Beaumont Enterprise*, January 25, 1930. Article by Robert Jones.

¹⁸ *United States Official Postal Guide*, 1904.

enough to be located in one of the settlers' homes; others were in small crossroad stores. In 1904 we find Calcasieu had sixty-three post offices;¹⁸ and to show there was steady growth, in 1910 we find seventy-five offices.¹⁹

The following names were post offices in Calcasieu in 1910:

April	Dry Creek	Kinder	Roanoke
Bancroft	Edgerly	Kipling	Seal
Baylor	Edna	Lake Arthur	Simmons
Bear	Elizabeth	Lake Charles	Singer
Bell City	Elton	LeBlanc	Starks
Blewett	Ennes	Longville	Sugartown
Bon Ami	Evart	Lowry	Sulphur
Bond	Fenton	Ludington	Tennville
Bundick	Fields	Merryville	Thornwell
Burisson	Fullton	Moeling	Topsy
Calcasieu	Gillis	Mossville	Vincent
Canton	Grant	Mystic	Vinton
Carlyss	Guy	Newton	Ward
Carson	Hayes	Oakdale	Wasey
China	Hecker	Oberlin	Welsh
Choupique	Iowa	Pawnee	West Lake
Coverdale	Jacksonville	Philipps Bluff	Woodlawn
Creek	Jaunita	Reenes	Yelger
Dequincy	Jennings	Rice	

CHAPTER IV

LUMBER INDUSTRY

Over a century ago Calcasieu Parish had no forests, for all the country lying between the Bloody River and the stream of dispute was a rolling prairie which extended from the great marsh far into the domains of the North. However, over this large territory birds and squirrels scattered seeds of cypress, oak, and pine, from which grew a dense forest. The pine section thus developed covered about sixty per cent of Calcasieu Parish and provided an excellent source of wealth for the white men, who were newcomers to this country. The soil, climate and other conditions united to produce just what was needed for lumber production.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1910.

Calcasieu yellow pine lumber, like "sterling" on silver, has made this section famous all over the world. Even today, if one should mention yellow pine to any lumberman, from Maine to Texas, he would at once think of Calcasieu with its thousands of acres of forest in which every tree is valuable.

At first the lumber industry consisted merely of cutting logs, which were used in the whole piece or floated down the river to sawmills in other places. Jacob Ryan and a few other carried on this type of industry, in favorable weather cutting five hundred feet a day. After the logs were rolled out of the river, they were scaled and laid across a ditch deep enough to permit a man to manipulate one end of a crosscut saw. By means of a string and a gourd of soot taken from the chimney, a fairly straight line was drawn the length of the log and followed by the sawyers.

When the courthouse was being built at Marion in 1840, it became necessary that lumber be provided for the doors, ceilings, facings and floors. Thomas M. Williamson, the first police juror of Dry Creek and Sugartown, as well as one of the first settlers of the parish, erected near the mouth of Dry Creek a sawmill, at which he cut the necessary lumber which was floated down the river to Marion. A crosscut saw that he used to cut the logs for the lumber is today in the pioneer's cabin on the fair grounds at De Ridder.¹

According to records, there was located along the Old Town Bay on the Calcasieu River the Sittig Mill, which remained in order until 1870.² Down the river some distance at Rose Bluff, near the present oil tank farm on Lot 4, Section 20-10-9, which was entered from the government by Amede Pujo in 1850, was situated another of the earliest mills, which in 1866 Amede Pujo sold to Perkins and Son for \$12,000, which shows that it was quite a mill at that time.³

In 1852 Jacob Ryan owned a mill located at the foot of Ryan Street, from which he supplied lumber for most of the village of Lake Charles.⁴

In 1855 Daniel Goos came steaming up the lake and at the first shot from a twenty-pound gun which graced the bow of his vessel, every slave within hearing distance took to the woods

¹ *Lake Charles American Press*, November 4, 1931. Article by Robert Jones.

² Interview with Harry Geary, February, 1935.

³ Mayo files.

⁴ *Lake Charles American Press*, 1917.

to be followed by dogs, hogs, and everything else possessed of independent locomotion; they evidently believed that Gabriel had recovered his voice and was going to take a hand in affairs of the frontier village. So much cheap timber looked inviting to Captain Goos, and within sixty days he had dismantled his mill at Ocean Springs, Mississippi, and had it running on the banks of the Calcasieu River. His industry thrived and within a short time the real settlement of the country began, with people from all sections coming in.⁵

At West Lake the heirs of the original owner, William Smith, in 1860 sold to Sennett, Chapman, and Hughes the Smith mill, which was located on a ten-acre tract on the river at the lower end of the claims. In 1863 Chapman sold to Sennett his interest in the ten acres and the sawmill.⁶

Near the present location of Miss Mathilda Gray's home on the Calcasieu River, near the bridge, L. C. Dees built prior to 1868 a mill known as the "Yankee Mill". In the deed of that date it was called the "Old Saw Mill". The land was entered by George O. Elms in 1860, who stated in a notice in the paper of that time that he claimed all improvements on the entry.⁷

In 1870 the A. J. Perkins mill at West Lake changed to the partnership of Perkins and Charles Miller. In 1890 it had a capacity of from sixty to seventy thousand feet daily. It has shown great improvements through the years. Lumber was shipped by schooner and rail to Mexico, Texas, Colorado, and Kansas.⁸ In 1905 this mill was purchased by R. Krause and W. H. Managan, Sr., who formed the corporation of Krause and Managan Lumber Company, Ltd. In the rear of the mill is a marsh place which has been filled in to a depth of eight to ten feet with sawdust and is used as a lumber yard. It was claimed that the dampness was taken by the sawdust and the lumber could be seasoned free from mould spots.⁹

In 1866, at what is called Norris's Point, W. B. Norris established the Norris mill. When first established, it was small and supplied all the needs; but in 1872 the demand for lumber became so great that Mr. Norris tore the small mill down and erected a large, double one, running two circular saws. This was burned

⁵ Miss Maude Reid's Scrap Book.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ A. M. Mayo files.

⁸ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 157.

⁹ Interview with R. Krause, February, 1935.

in 1873 and was rebuilt the same year, as business was improving steadily, and the demand on the Norris mill was becoming greater each day. In January, 1888, this mill was again destroyed by fire, but within a few months another was erected in its place. In it were installed a band saw and a finishing circular saw. The band saw is supposed to cut about two-thirds the amount of a circular saw. In Mr. Norris's mill the first planer was installed in 1868.¹⁰

A mill called Drew's mill was on the west side of Griffith's Bayou. The bridge across this bayou is west of the Paul Moss home, formerly the Perkins home, on the Lake Shore Drive. In 1868 William Geryler made a contract with David Griffith to buy land and build a mill in Lake Charles. In 1867 Griffith leased the mill.¹¹

There were several other mills built prior to 1875. Smart's mill was owned and operated by William Smart at Bagdad. Lock's mill, located at Prien Lake near where the country club now is, was owned by Captain George Lock and Captain Daniel Goos. When this was burned in 1878, Captain Lock built a new mill on Calcasieu River at Lockport, which later became the Lock-Moore Company.¹² Moss Mill at Moss Lake, owned and operated by Alfred Moss, was later abandoned; Vincent's mill at West Landing was owned by W. Vincent; and Wells' mill, Black Bayou, was owned by Governor J. Madison Wells.¹³

Until 1878 the lumber industry was carried on in Calcasieu at the expense of "Uncle Sam". The lumberman ignored official letters from Washington demanding that the land from which the logs were cut and put in the river at twenty cents each be "taken up", and a title of the ownership of the land be filed with the government. After there were continued refusals to comply with the government official orders, a United States gunboat appeared on the river and confiscated seventy-five per cent of the logs afloat. Proceeds of the sale went into the national treasury.¹⁴ The cry among the lumbermen of Calcasieu at the time was "You take our logs, and you take our food."

¹⁰ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 157.

¹¹ A. M. Mayo files.

¹² Interview with Harry Geary.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Lake Charles American Press*, June 9, 1928.

For a number of years after the close of the War, there was a period of business reconstruction in the South, a period during which the energies and resources of men were employed in holding what they had saved from the wreck and in slowly regaining something of what had been lost. There was no pushing on into new fields of business activity. Northern and eastern capital was slow to come to a prostrate region. Southwest Louisiana, in common with all of the South, suffered from this stagnation. At that time it was the frontier of the South, a region almost unknown, and inhabited only by the lumbermen in the pine regions.

It was not until after 1880 that any particular attention was attracted in this direction. In 1883 the North American Land and Timber Company purchased a large amount of the Calcasieu land.¹⁵

Mr. Mason was one of the first northern lumbermen to recognize the value of the Calcasieu yellow pine, and to invest his capital and energy in its manufacture into lumber. After thirty years of experience in the lumber business in Michigan, he saw that the northern pine forests were rapidly becoming exhausted. During that time he had built and operated four saw mills. A journey of exploration through the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida showed him no suitable opening, and he came to Louisiana, in company with Mr. Penoyer, one of the largest manufacturers of Michigan lumber. Calcasieu pine and the city of Lake Charles both suited these gentlemen, and they decided to invest money in Lake Charles' milling industry.

Another man to come in 1882 was Nathan B. Bradley, who had been engaged in the lumber business in Michigan. He bought from the United States government thousands of acres of timber at \$1.25 per acre, and from Daniel Goos he bought his mill on the river in Lake Charles and then enlarged it. It was known as the Bradley-Ramsay mill.¹⁶

One of the first northern companies to embark largely in the lumber business in southwest Louisiana was the Calcasieu Lumber Company, whose mill was located on the Calcasieu River at what is now Goosport, the most prosperous suburb of Lake Charles. Mr. Mason conducted this business until 1886, when the Calcasieu Lumber Company was succeeded by the Bradley-Ramsay Lumber Company. This company was composed of some

¹⁵ *Lake Charles Daily Press*, Special Edition, 1895.

¹⁶ A. M. Mayo files.

of the largest lumber manufacturers of Michigan. W. E. Ramsay was chief executive of the Company; the vice-president was N. B. Bradley of Bay City, Michigan, who never made Lake Charles his home. Chester Brown was treasurer. The paid-up capital of the company was \$500,000. The mills, "The Michigan Mill", and the "Mt. Hope Mill", were both located at Goosport. They had a capacity of 50,000 feet with a run of eleven hours per day. Both plants were thoroughly equipped with the latest improved machinery. "The Michigan Mill" was supplied with power by an engine and boiler of 350 horsepower and operated one band and two circular saws. It was supplied with edgers, trimmers, slashes, etc., and line rollers carrying the lumber to all points of the large lumberyards, and carrying the finished products direct from the saws to the cars on the river front to be loaded for shipment. The "Mt. Hope" plant was as complete, though less extensive than the "Michigan Mill".¹⁷ In 1906 the Bradley-Ramsay Company, with all of their timber land, was bought by the Long-Bell Lumber Company for the sum of \$1,000,000.¹⁸

At the north end of Lake Charles stood the big sawmill buildings of the Bell-Bunker Lumber Company. A. J. Bell, of Lake Charles, formerly of New Orleans, was president; M. R. Jones of Houston, Texas, vice-president; C. Bunker of Lake Charles, formerly of Boston, secretary and treasurer; and W. W. Flanders of Lake Charles, assistant secretary and treasurer.

In this section of the country the Bell mill had a reputation for sawing the greater length timbers, having sawed logs over seventy feet in length. A speed record was also established; the mill had a daily capacity of 85,000 feet, and it was known to have cut 192,000 feet a day on several occasions. Mr. Bell used a circular saw and a monster Corliss engine of 400 horsepower. In connection with the mill there was a complete electric light plant.

Owing to the fact that the Bell-Bunker mill carried such a large stock of timber in its booms, a considerable boatbuilding industry was established in connection with the mill. Logs that had been in the water for a long period were found to be superior for boat building. Seventy-five barges and five tugboats were constructed at the mill. Each barge had a capacity of 1,500 bales of cotton.¹⁹

¹⁷ *Lake Charles Daily Press*, Special Edition, 1895.

¹⁸ A. M. Mayo files.

¹⁹ *Lake Charles Daily Press*, Special Edition, 1895.

The Powell Lumber Company was one of the largest lumber manufacturing concerns in Calcasieu Parish, having been established and incorporated in 1906, with a capitalization of \$125,000. This company manufactured the "Calcasieu Long Leaf Yellow Pine" lumber, making a specialty of railroad and mining timbers, and having mills for the purpose situated upon the Southern Pacific Railroad, Colorado Southern, Missouri Pacific, and Kansas City Southern systems, with headquarters in the Viterbo Building in Lake Charles. The mill had a daily capacity of 75,000 feet, with dry kiln, planers, etc. The company owned a large acreage of the best longleaf pine, and had its own standard gauge railroad, twenty miles long, running into the heart of its holdings.

In 1907 the company found it advisable to erect a mill at Edna, which had a daily cutting capacity of 100,000 feet. Officers of the company were: W. P. Weber, president; D. R. Kelly, vice president; and George M. King, secretary and treasurer.

The following is a list of mills and the output of lumber manufactured daily in 1911:²⁰

Name	Location	Daily Output
King Ryder Lumber Co.	Bon Ami	3,000,000 ft.
Central Coal and Coke Co.	Carson	150,000 "
R. I. Bernard	Dequincy	120,000 "
Hudson River Lumber Co.	De Ridder	100,000 "
Sabine Tram Company	Jaunita	75,000 "
Luddington Wells and Van Shaik Lumber Company	Luddington	150,000 "
P. V. Byrne	Kinder	150,000 "
Industrial Lumber Co.	Pannell	75,000 "
Krause and Managan	West Lake	50,000 "
J. Bell Lumber Co.	Moeling	75,000 "
Longville Lumber Co.	Longville	100,000 "

It would be impossible to estimate the material value of the pine forests of the section now and in the past; it is needless to state that the forests have been a source of wealth and development. Millions of dollars have come from them and have been turned into the various avenues of human requirements.

²⁰ *Lake Charles American Press*, June 28, 1911.

Cypress Mills

While the gentlemen of the yellow pine fraternity have accomplished such wonders, they have no advantage over their cousins, the cypress men. In the old days cypress was cut in anticipation of the June rise. All through the winter days and bleak days of spring, drenched by cold rains or chilled by icy winds, the men toiled in the dark swamps, felling trees against the time of the yearly high water, when began the work of floating the logs out through creeks to the main river. Sometimes the rise failed to come, and the timber had to lie for a whole year at the mercy of the worms, entailing heavy loss upon the owners and sometimes shutting down the shingle mills for months. This crude method was soon improved upon, and then the shingle manufacturers were independent of rises and unaffected by droughts, for the timber was hauled out of the river by means of a pullboat anchored along the bank. The engines alternately operated two drums; the large one carried an inch cable of steel and was used to snake out the logs from the swamps, at the same time unwinding a light wire rope from a smaller drum. When the log splashed into the water, the main drum was ungeared. In 1895 cypress to the amount of 5,180,000 feet was floated down the Calcasieu River and converted into 64,500,000 shingles.²¹

One of the shingle mills was the Hanson mill. In 1867 Jacob Ryan formed a partnership with Captain Thomas, conducting a shingle mill on the lake front where cypress shingles were made. This mill continued to operate until the early 'eighties, when it was burned.²²

James P. Geary operated a shingle mill in 1885, his plant being located on the lake shore, where the city market now stands.²³

On the Calcasieu River, at the north end of Ryan Street, John H. Poe operated a shingle mill in 1895, which ran regularly and manufactured cypress shingles exclusively, the capacity being 20,000,000 shingles per annum. The company owned cypress lands to supply the mill until 1903 and was not dependent upon high water to secure the logs. These were obtained by means of a steam pullboat, which dragged them from the swamp into the river to

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² A. M. Mayo files.

²³ Interview with Harry Geary.

be floated to the mill. This mill was thoroughly equipped with the best of machinery and was connected by switches with the K. C. W. & G. and the Southern Pacific railways. Its trade over these lines extended into Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Missouri.²⁴

Naval Stores

Another milestone in the march of industrial progress was the story of the development of the turpentine industry. In the early days the naval store man acted as the pilot for progress in his march through the South, and blazed the way for the railroad and sawmill. Now the railways blaze the way to the turpentine, and sawmill men follow it. In early years the friendship between the sawmill men and the naval store operator could not be compared to that of Damon and Pythias, but like the enmity that existed between the hostile Indians and the white settlers who came to drive them from the plains. The sawmill man claimed that the turpentine operator killed the usefulness of the tree for timber purposes. That might have been true then, but since modern methods have been introduced in the turpentine business, the sawmill man and the turpentine man work hand in hand, and the sawmill man now leases his virgin forests to the naval store operators for the purpose of securing raw materials for spirits of turpentine and rosin, this affording the sawmill man additional profit on his investment.

The turpentine industry, while comparatively new in Louisiana, was as old as the South; it was through the turpentine industry that the old southern states, the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama, were able to recuperate their fortunes lost in the Civil War. It was the turpentine man who brought happiness to the veterans who came back home and found their plantations laid bare by the Federals. The turpentine man leased the virgin forests, applied his ax to the tree in order to skin off the bark, and extracted the juices which were distilled into the spirits and shipped to all parts of the world. By doing this the turpentine man placed sufficient means into the pockets of the landowner so that he could make a crop and live while the crop was making.

How the naval store company garnered the raw material is an interesting story. The pine trees are tapped by skinning down the bark to a depth of about three-fourths of an inch. Buckets

²⁴ *Lake Charles Daily Press*, Special Edition, 1895.

are used in gathering the sap at the customary time. The time of operation of the trees, that is, gathering the sap, is three years. This time is limited in this section of the country because of the demands of the sawmill men, who usually want to saw the tree up into timber at the end of the third year. A pine tree will yield a profitable supply of crude gum, from which turpentine can be distilled and rosin extracted, for a number of years; that is, as high up as it can be skinned at a three-quarters of an inch depth. It was the custom, when the turpentine man controlled the forests, to cut the bark up as high as it could possibly be reached. Over the forests, at various distances, are placed barrels, and the raw material is placed here and then hauled to the distillery.

The first step taken by the workers is to place cups on all the trees to catch the flow of the gum. In this the modern method differs from the ancient. Under this old method the tree was cupped, that is, a deep gash was cut in the tree to catch the sap. It was this cut that the timber men objected to and claimed that it ruined the tree.

Between March and November is the turpentine time, and each week during this period a new streak is cut from the sap of the tree. A streak is about three-fourths of an inch high, and one-half an inch deep. It is very necessary to cut a new streak every week to insure the flow of the gum. The cups fill on an average of once every three weeks, after which the supply is gathered and hauled to the still. The crude gum produces two products, the pure spirits of pine, called turpentine, and rosin.

A crop of boxes, as they are known to the turpentine man, consists of 10,500 trees cut for the business. On an average a crop of boxes will yield fifty barrels of turpentine and 300 barrels of rosin averaging 280 pounds to the barrel. In Calcasieu the average timber will yield a crop of boxes every 150 acres.²⁵ The distilling process is very interesting. When the crude gum reaches the distillery plant, it is poured into a copper receptacle and changed into spirits and rosin by a process of fire and water, the heat causing the spirits of turpentine to condense and flow through a coil of copper pipe. The spirits, being the lighter, rise higher than the water and come out of the still in a finished state.

After the spirits have been taken out, the rosin is turned out into a separate vat and is strained through fine copper wire

²⁵ *Lake Charles American Press*, June 26, 1911.

and cotton batting. The temperature reached during the distilling process is 316° Fahrenheit. When the spirits come out of the distillery, they are a finished product ready for commercial and medicinal purposes. The rosin is used a great deal in the state in which it comes from the still, but a large per cent is re-distilled and made into pine oil, pine tar, and various other articles.²⁶

The Independent Naval Stores Company operates 20,000 acres of turpentine forests a year, making an average output of 7,000 barrels of turpentine and 40,000 barrels of rosin. The products are shipped to all parts of the world. All domestic markets are supplied.

The foreign export trade consists of shipments to China, Japan, and all the colonies of America, including the Isle of Guam, the Philippines, Porto Rico, and Cuba. The plants of the company are situated at Reeves, Louisiana, the headquarters to which all reports are forwarded; Gillis, on the Louisville and Nashville railroads; LeBlanc, on the Frisco system; and Kinder, on the Frisco. In Reeves the central office of the company is located. H. H. Gordon is president; A. Vizard, vice-president; and H. H. Long, secretary and treasurer. The Independent Naval Stores Company was capitalized at \$200,000.²⁷

CHAPTER V

SULPHUR AND OIL

The first authentic geologic information concerning Calcasieu Parish and its sulphur deposit is a report of Hilgard's thirty-day reconnaissance in western Louisiana in 1868. He reported the boring of two artesian wells on two small islands in the fresh-water marsh which forms the head of Bayou Choupique, a small tributary of the Calcasieu River. One, being sunk by the Louisiana Petroleum Company, had reached a depth of 1,230 feet; and another, sunk by Dr. Kirkman, 450 feet.¹ Small quantities of oil were found in the Louisiana Oil Company well at a depth of 380 feet, but its slight value in comparison with the great sulphur deposit was at once recognized.²

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹ United States Geological Survey, *Bulletin*, Nos. 426-429, p. 99.

² *Ibid.*

An expensive and disastrous attempt was made under General Jules Brady to reach this sulphur deposit by sinking an iron caisson through the gravel and quicksand, which was more than 400 feet thick. Huge tubular sections were brought by water from France, unloaded on the west bank of the Calcasieu River below Lake Charles, in part hauled by ox teams to the "mine", in part left on the river bank for years, till they were obtained by the Myles Salt Company for casing its salt shaft on Weeks Island. In sinking this caisson to a depth of 110 feet, several miners were overcome by poisonous gases and finally the undertaking was abandoned.³ Jules Brady devoted the best years of his life to the extraction of this sulphur, spent his entire fortune and the investments of many of his friends, and died a broken-hearted man because of his lack of success.

After the failure of the French company, the American Sulphur Company made an attempt to shaft to the sulphur deposit; and after expending approximately a million dollars they also abandoned the idea of shafting to the sulphur, as the quicksand overlying the sulphur deposit set all efforts at naught. Then a Belgian company sought to conquer the quicksand by sinking huge iron rings to shut out the sand; but this was also unsuccessful. Finally all efforts at mining the sulphur were given up, and the land now valued in the thousands of dollars per acre, at one time was actually sold for taxes, so futile did the efforts to mine sulphur appear to be.

A chemist, Herman Frasch, then employed by the Standard Oil Company, came south on a business trip and visited the sulphur mines. He saw the possibilities of wealth they had, provided a method of mining could be devised. Frasch endeavored to interest the stockholders of the Louisiana Mining Company, who at this time owned the property, in his process of liquefying the sulphur by forcing superheated water into the sulphur deposit. They, seemingly, had no confidence in his process and declined his proposition, but offered to sell the property. This offer was accepted, and the Union Sulphur Company was organized.⁴

The first sulphur was produced in 1894, the total production for this first year being five tons. Then the pumping equipment,

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Union Sulphur Company Office Records, Sulphur, Louisiana.

similar to that now used for pumping oil, gave way and no more sulphur was produced until the latter part of 1895. At this time the well was again put in shape to pump and 500 tons were produced, after which the pumping equipment again gave way and the well was shut down. The next sulphur was obtained in 1896, when the well was finally put in shape to pump and 1,863 tons were produced. The method of pumping sulphur, however, was changed at this time, the use of sucker rods and valves being replaced by the air lift, which eliminated the difficulties previously encountered along this line. In 1897 the production of sulphur was 1,145 tons; in 1898, 1,835 tons, when operations were discontinued on account of the light production of sulphur and the difficulty in securing funds to continue operations.⁵

At this time, Mr. Frasch went to Port Empedocle, Sicily, and drilled two wells between the two sulphur-producing mines, with the idea of using his process in producing sulphur; but both wells drilled were barren of sulphur, and conditions were so bad that he decided to return to Louisiana.

In 1900, operations at the Sulphur Mine were resumed and 172 tons were produced; the following year there were 294 tons, and in 1902, 4,814 tons.⁶ By 1905, the center of the sulphur industry had been transferred to Sulphur, Louisiana.⁷ The geological report of the United States government for the year 1909 put the sulphur output of the United States at approximately 300,000 tons and ninety-eight per cent of it came from the one Louisiana mine. No single mine in the world equaled it in production. The remarkable efficiency of Frasch's process is shown by the fact that the geologist Bell estimated that the extraction amounted to 94.79 per cent.⁸

The Union Sulphur Company operated in a sulphur bed that is said to average 650 feet in thickness and to lie about a thousand feet below the surface.⁹ In the course of operation 712 wells were drilled, of which only about fifty failed to strike sulphur.¹⁰

The Frasch system of sinking wells was with one pipe inside another, forcing the steam and hot water down through the outer pipe, and pumping the melted sulphur (held in suspension in the

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Times-Picayune* (New Orleans), July 26, 1934.

⁸ *Washington Evening Star*, April 2, 1925.

⁹ *Gulf Ports Magazine*, March, 1921.

¹⁰ *Washington Evening Star*, April 2, 1925.

hot water), up through the inner pipe and pouring this into great bins sixty feet high and hundreds of feet in length and breadth, when the water drains off and the sulphur hardens instantly. These bins are torn away and the great blocks of sulphur are broken down with light shots and loaded into open cars.¹¹

With the main problem solved, a host of subsidiary problems arose. It was necessary to build and operate steamers to transport sulphur products by water. Louisiana sulphur was compelled to establish itself in the market to convince the skeptical purchaser of foreign sulphur that it was really sulphur, not only as good as any, but better, since it was practically free from impurities.

In spite of all these obstacles the company made rapid progress in the world's sulphur market. It reduced the cost of sulphur to American consumers from twenty-five to fifty per cent. It pays heavy taxes to the community in which it is operated and has a stimulating effect upon business.¹²

Jennings Oil Field

This oil field is located in southern Louisiana near the center of T. 9 S., R. 2 W. It is reached most conveniently by private conveyance from the village of Jennings. It is six miles northeast of Jennings.¹³

As to topography, the country seems monotonously flat. Many of the five-foot contour lines are long distances apart. Near the bayous, however, as might be expected, there are some slight declivities, but there are no bluffs, no rock exposures. In the bayous the Gulf tides are felt, and during dry seasons the level of the streams is practically that of the Gulf. This land is but a portion of the Gulf floor that has been raised a few feet above tide and is now slightly dissected by sluggish, meandering streams. From the above statement it may be concluded that the region about the Jennings old field shows no topographic features that could be properly referred to differential orogenic movements.

A spring not many yards north of the first well in the field, Jennings Oil Company No. 1, had been known even to the earliest settlers as being somewhat remarkable in that it was apparently

¹¹ *Gulf Ports Magazine*, March, 1921.

¹² *Lake Charles American Press*, June 28, 1911.

¹³ United States Geological Survey, *Bulletin*, Nos. 426-429, pp. 50-52.

located on high ground and the water was always agitated by escaping gas. As the locality showed a mound, a depression, and gas emanations, in accordance with the signs of Spindle Top, immediately upon the discovery of oil at the latter locality in January, 1901, the "mamou" region began to be looked upon with favor. The Jennings Oil Company procured the services of the Heywood Brothers, successful operators in the Spindle Top field, to put down the test well. In August, 1901, it had reached "pay sand", and was down 1,822 feet. It gushed oil and sand spasmodically for eleven hours and then clogged up. Though this well was not successful financially, it proved the pressure of oil and gas in considerable quantities in the Mamou region.¹⁴

In the history of the development left us, we note the following:¹⁵ Southern No. 1 was soon started in the woods two miles south of the pioneer Jennings well, but though it attained, according to reports of the time, a depth of 2,600 feet, it was not a success. The materials brought from near the bottom of the well showed no characteristic extinct species of shell and a decidedly fluviatile appearance. Southern No. 2, close to the pioneer Jennings, was next to come in. Oil was said to be coming from a depth of 1,785 feet, though some shell shown to the writer was reported to have come from 1,800 feet. Drillers accustomed to obtaining oil from the porous limestone at Spindle Top at first did not know how to manage the fine, incoherent sand at Jennings. Southern No. 2 had no strainer, hence it was no wonder that it did not gush after the Spindle Top fashion.

In March, 1902, the Mamou well on the "hill" and the Crowley well, just east, were practically abandoned. The former was then reported to have attained a depth of 2,200 feet, but the Crowley well did not exceed 1,200 feet.

Before midsummer, 1902, Jennings No. 3, Pelican No. 1, and Home Oil Company No. 1 had been drilled along the road from the oil field in Jennings, along a supposed line of the anticline, "without remunerative results". The Jennings field seemed to be located in a hollow. In this "proved" field, Southern Nos. 3 and 4 were fairly successful gushers.

Jennings No. 2, brought in by the Heywood brothers on June 28, 1902, was perhaps the first really satisfactory well in

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 60-89.

the field. Its six-inch casing was carried down 1,800 feet and great pains were taken to perfect and lower the strainer or liner to the oil sand.

Profiting by the mistakes of the Spindle Top and Sour Lake fields, those interested in the Jennings field had built a well-equipped four-inch pipe line to Jennings before these successful gushers had been brought in. In midsummer, 1902, oil was being loaded at Jennings into Southern Pacific tank cars. The Heywood Transportation Company operated twenty-five barges and six steamers and tugs on the Mermentau River and its tributaries, and rice growers for miles around took away hundreds of barrels of oil to burn in their irrigation plants. The prices ranged from thirty to forty cents a barrel, according to the quantity sold.

In 1903 the proved field was extended east 1,000 feet by the Superior Oil Company, and the Crowley Company was rapidly extending its boundaries to the northeast. A six-inch pipe line from the field to Mermentau station was completed and equipped with pumping stations, loading racks, and steel tanks, but owing to high pipe line rates the Crowley Company found it necessary to construct a four-inch line to the Eunice branch of the Southern Pacific railroad. This was completed before the middle of 1904. In the meantime, the famous Chicago-Jennings Well No. 2 had been brought in, giving the field over 2,000 barrels of new production and extending its bounds several hundred feet to the south. The remarkable success of this well was attributed to the fact that the superior Getty "liner" was used in it. The fair success of the Jenkie well, still farther south, led development rapidly in that direction. There were thirty-three producing wells in this field by February 5, 1904.

Production from the deep (1,900 feet) sand in the southeastern part of the field was begun by the Morse Company in July, 1904. Producers (Latreille forty-acre tract) No. 1 was a 4,000-barrel addition to the field, and extended its limits 500 feet to the southeast. Bass and Benckenstein's No. 1, though scarcely extending the limits of the Jennings field, set a new pace for a single well production in the field, furnishing about one-half the 28,000 barrels produced daily by the whole field in October, 1904. In the fall of 1904, the Heywood Oil Company brought in its famous No. 1, which furnished a new production of 10,000 barrels. Early in 1905 Bass and Benckenstein completed a six-inch pipe line to Egan on the Eunice branch of the Southern Pacific, and

before the middle of the year had a four-inch extension from Egan to the Atchafalaya River and were shipping by barges up and down the Mississippi. This line is said to be fifty-four miles long. In the fall of 1905 Bass and Benckenstein, with Mr. Carns, formed the Evangeline Oil Company of New Jersey and thereafter all their holdings were known by that designation.

The season of 1903 was discouraging in many ways. Most of the wells had become "pumpers" and in many wells large quantities of salt water were brought to the surface with the oil. Although somewhat more oil was produced in 1905 than in previous years, prices were such that the total value of the production was but two-thirds what it had been when the large gushers were not active.

In 1906, however, the Heywood Oil Company brought in its No. 1 on the Crowley lease, which proved to be a spouter of the first quality, yielding 8,000 barrels daily without salt water. This added 500 feet to the proved territory on the northeast. The Jennings Heywood Oil syndicate's \$100,000 plant was installed in the autumn of 1906. In spite of decreased production from individual wells, and the large amount of salt water appearing in many, prices were somewhat more encouraging. The year marks the maximum production of the Jennings field, a trifle over 9,000,000 barrels. The year was also marked by the completion of the Texas Company's six-inch pipe line to Lake Charles on the Kansas City Southern. Oil was turned into this line on March 13, and for the first time in the history of the field, oil could be shipped on a railroad other than the Southern Pacific.

The Franklin well, three-fourths of a mile east of the field, drilled in 1906, was finally abandoned. Though prices were on an average much better in 1907 than they had been in 1906, the increase of salt water and the necessity of finding storage for it on account of complaints of the rice growers in the surrounding country caused the cost of production to advance rapidly.

Early in 1908 considerable activity was directed to that portion of the field lying a fourth of a mile west of the old developments and about the Eunice-Crowley lease. This was brought about by the satisfactory results of the Nobles Company's Well No. 1. In general, the production of the wells was decreasing, salt water was increasing, salt water storage was again called for during the rice irrigation season, prices were depressed, and

except perhaps in the Producer's forty-acre Latreille lease, the end of production seemed fast approaching. Perhaps the most noteworthy event of the year was the withdrawal of the Heywood brothers from active interest in the operations of the field. They sold out to the Gulf Refining Company for \$300,000 cash and certain royalties. The purchasers at once took active steps to develop their holdings, but up to 1911 had met with no marked success financially.

Therefore, we can draw the following conclusions: that the oil in the Jennings field has come up through a crevice or fault fissure and spread laterally into quaternary and miocene beds, there can be no doubt. Though the best producing "sands" in the central portion of the field lie about 1,800 to 2,100 feet beneath the surface, others to the west, some even but 100 feet below the surface, have been filled with seepage from the central fissure. To the east the miocene bed descends rapidly and little seepage could take place in that direction. So far as easily attainable new production was concerned, the Jennings field was not promising in 1910.¹⁶

Welsh Field

This oil field is located in Sections 21 and 22, T. 9 S., R. 5 W., about three miles northwest of Welsh. In an area of 1,500 square feet twenty-one wells have been drilled since the summer of 1902; seventeen of these have produced oil at some time or other. No one of these wells has ever been a large producer for any great period. In 1903 production of the field was 25,166 barrels, a daily average of about sixty-nine barrels. In August, 1904, the daily average was from 300 to 400 barrels. Later production: 1905—10,000 barrels; 1906—23,996; 1907—47,316; 1908—43,976. For these six years the average was eighty-five barrels a day.¹⁷

Vinton Field

The Vinton dome is about three miles southeast of Vinton. The sink or depression in the dome, now occupied by a shallow lake, is a noteworthy feature. As seen from a distance this is one of the most prominent domes along the Gulf coast. It rises conspicuously above the coastal prairie lands, and its form is certainly suggestive of unusual structural and topographic features.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 100.

Early in the days of the great excitement at Spindle Top, which lies a short distance to the west, this dome, on account of its size and form, and its gas and "sour" water seepage, was regarded as a most likely locality for finding oil in immense quantities. It is rumored that Mr. Vincent's holdings of several thousand acres in this vicinity were actually bargained for at a rate of \$300 an acre. However, this transaction was never completed.

W. B. Sharp and Edward Prather drilled on this dome in 1902, and oil was reported from the same region in that year at a depth of 280 feet. The T. C. Stribling well, also of early date, reported that a depth of 1,000 feet was said to have been reached, though the log was complete at 454 feet only, and a heavy bed of very coarse gravel between 400 and 500 feet almost impossible of penetration with the rotary drill was found. There was also discovered a strong artesian flow of black sulphur water from this gravel, with oil very near the surface, beneath the twenty-foot stratum of surface clay.

In 1907, Wilkins, Zeigler, and Rowson started a test hole on the Caffel farm, adjoining the Vincent tract, but after reaching a depth of 700 feet, abandoned the enterprise.¹⁸

John Geddings Gray, a resident of Vinton, had great faith in the oil project. In 1910 the work of drilling for oil was commenced with a view of developing the field for commercial purposes. During this year the field did not come into prominence, as a producer, and this was not done until March, 1911.

After a few months there were forty wells, producing an average of 12,000 barrels a day, giving Mr. Gray a net income of \$1,000 a day as royalty from the field.¹⁹

The work of developing the Gray field near Vinton was so rapid after the first wells were brought in, and the influx of population was so rapid, that it became necessary for a large army of carpenters to work almost night and day to supply the immediate demands for houses. A town grew up, as if by magic, in a single night. In honor of the pioneer developer of the field, and because it was on his land, the new oil town was named Ged, after Mr. Gray. He was known among his wide acquaintances as "Ged".²⁰

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 103.

¹⁹ *Lake Charles American Press*, Special Edition, 1911.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Of all the wells, the Gray Well No. 13, with a capacity of 2,000 barrels a day, stands at the head of the list. The average depth of the wells in this field was 2,000 feet and the average cost of drilling a well, including the labor, was \$10,000.²¹ With a payroll estimated at \$10,000 a week, oil spelled prosperity for Calcasieu Parish.

The Texas Transportation Company, one of the largest pipe line companies in the world, had offices in Ged, in charge of Mr. Powell, a district foreman. In 1911 the Texas Pipe Line Company was laying a line at Vinton, so as to give the Ged, or Vinton field an outlet for the large quantity of oil that was produced daily. The oil was immediately piped, after being brought to the surface, to large tanks and shipped to nearby refineries.

CHAPTER VI

POPULATION

Calcasieu, like most of the other parishes in southwest Louisiana, has quite a mixed population, consisting of Acadians, Creoles, Americans, from half a dozen different states, and a few Indians. The Lake Charles *Echo* of October 24, 1890, says of the peopling of Calcasieu:

In the early days of America, when Spaniards were settling Louisiana and Mexico, while Texas was a wild prairie region, the land unknown on the outskirts or confines of the great colonies, one having its seat in the famed palaces of the Montezumas, and the other having its center in the valley of the wooded banked Father of Waters, the great continent-draining Mississippi, the present region of Calcasieu was the home of a few tribes of Indians and the wild deer. When Texas loomed up into a great country, and as the Lone Star State severed her connection with Mexico, our section remained the outskirts between Louisiana and Texas.¹

Calcasieu River was then known as the Rio Hondo. The lands lying between it and the Sabine were disputed territory. A few adventurous pioneers came into the section east of the river under what was known as Spanish grants; a few others, perhaps two hundred and fifty, settled in the western region under the so-

²¹ *Ibid.*

¹ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 123.

called Rio Hondo claims.² This disputed land was sometimes called "No Man's Land" and was infested with thieves, robbers, and desperadoes from various sections of the country. But after the United States was recognized as the owner of the territory, most of these people moved on.³

Some of the earliest settlers of Calcasieu were the LeBleus, Charles Sallier, Reese Perkins, Jacob Ryan, all on the east side of the Calcasieu River. West of the river were others, Joseph Cornow, Hiram Ours, Dempsy Ile, Hardy Coward and John, his brother, William and Archibald Smith, Elias Blount, Joseph Clark, and John Henderson. These settled prior to 1824, in order that they might get the benefit of the Rio Hondo claims.⁴

Martin LeBleu left France, came to Virginia, and after living there for five years he migrated westward, having married Dela Marion. On their journey they crossed the Calcasieu River at a point six miles northeast of Lake Charles. His wife was so delighted with this place, thinking the scenery the most beautiful she had seen, that she urged him to end his travels here. But Martin, not yet satisfied, turned westward and came to the shore of Lake Charles, settling about six miles east of the lake on English Bayou. There they built a log cabin, which may still be seen today.⁵

Another interesting figure among the early settlers was Jacob Ryan who settled here in 1817. He was originally from Georgia, and had settled in Vermilion Parish, before moving to Calcasieu, where he lived until his death.⁶ Of those who came here to make their home and who now have descendants in this parish, Saddler Johnson was reputed to have been the first. His trade as a saddler was responsible for his appellation. He built a shack on the bluff of Whiskey-Chitto Creek, and later moved westward.⁷ According to tradition, the first permanent settlement west of Calcasieu was made at Sugartown in 1825. The next was made in what is the Big Woods settlement, by the Smarts, Perkins, and others about 1832.⁸ About 1830 there came three brothers from South Carolina—P. D. Mims, L. N. Mims, and Sumter Mims. In 1830 and

² *Ibid.*

³ *Lake Charles American Press*, November 4, 1931. Article by Robert Jones.

⁴ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 123-124.

⁵ Interview with Mrs. A. LeBleu.

⁶ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 124.

⁷ *Lake Charles American Press*, November 4, 1931. Article by Robert Jones.

⁸ *Ibid.*

1835, about six or seven miles south of the present town of Leesville, a settlement was made at Petersburg, named for Peter Eddleman.⁹ The Welborns, McGees, Crafts, Earls, and Hickmans were responsible for a settlement on the lower Anacoco Creek about 1840.¹⁰

These settlers were spread over a large section of country and found it inconvenient because of the long distance, poor roads, and slow means of travel, to go to Opelousas, the parish seat, to attend court and to vote. For these reasons they determined to form a parish of their own, and on March 24, 1840, the parish of Calcasieu was carved from St. Landry.

The first census report that lists Calcasieu as a separate unit was made in 1840. Little information, however, was tabulated, and that was of a general nature. The total population, including slaves, was 2,057, and the majority of workers were classified under the heading of Agriculture. The following census of 1850 showed an increase in parish population, with a total of 3,914 inhabitants. This census was broader in scope than that of the preceding one and revealed more clearly the general character of the population. Each person was listed with his occupation and place of birth. This analysis revealed that by far the greater portion of the people were either small planters or farm laborers. The professional men were increasing, as was the school population. The major portion of the citizens were native-born Louisianians with a sparse sprinkling of settlers from other states and from Europe. The European-born population was almost all either French or Spanish.

From the time of the first settlement in this section until after the close of the Civil War, everything that was used, such as clothing, foods and farm implements, was made entirely at home. Cotton mills, syrup mills, grist mills, and hide tanneries were very common. Every farmhouse had its spinning wheel and a loom for weaving cloth.¹¹

Between 1850 and 1860 the country was being rapidly settled. In 1860, the population was listed at 5,928, and agriculture con-

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

tinued to be the principal source of livelihood. A greater part of the population than heretofore gave other parts of the country as their birthplaces. This was an indication that the parish's increase was not due to the birthrate alone, even though the tabulations revealed that larger families were the rule at that time. Foreign-born population also showed an increase.

The local press made very few comments anent the heart-rending days of Reconstruction in this section. Only one mention is made of the situation in the *Echo*, and that was at the time of Governor H. C. Warmoth's absence from the state: "Oscar Dunn (negro), Lieutenant-Governor, is Acting-Governor."¹² There is no doubt that this Reconstruction period had its influence upon the settling of Calcasieu. Many of the Federal soldiers settled in this territory and saw great advantages to be derived from its soil.¹³

By 1870 the population showed a steady increase, but the first notable advance occurred in 1879, when the Southern Pacific began to lay a roadbed for its line through Lake Charles. The company's tracks came only as far as Morgan City; the remainder of the trail to Texas had to be covered by stagecoach or by schooner around the Gulf of Mexico. The gap between Morgan City and Houston was closed in 1880, and the first passenger train ran an excursion on April 7, 1880.¹⁴ Coincident with the coming of the railroads came the opening by the federal government of the public lands. They were put on sale at \$1.25 per acre, and eastern capital, not slow to see the millions in the pine forests, bought them. The gradual development of the lumber industry brought a tide of immigration in from the North, and, indeed, from practically every state in the Union. The old wooden stores on Ryan Street in Lake Charles began to give way to modern structures; the old log cabin passed away in favor of the palatial residence; the old bunch arbor was torn down to give room for better church edifices; and the cow trails were obliterated by the surveying corps with steel rails.¹⁵

¹² *Echo* (Lake Charles), October 21, 1869. Henry Clay Warmoth was the carpetbag governor of Louisiana.

¹³ *Lake Charles Daily Press*, 1895, Special Edition.

¹⁴ Miss Maude Reid's Scrap Book.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

In June, 1882, Nathan B. Bradley, who had been engaged in the lumber business in Michigan, came to Calcasieu and bought thousands of acres of land at \$1.25 per acre, and engaged in the lumber business.

J. B. Watkins in 1883 came from Lawrence, Kansas, and purchased from the United States and the State of Louisiana over a million acres of prairie land lying south of Lake Charles and extending to the Gulf of Mexico. After acquiring these vast acres, he interested several capitalists in preparing it for settlement and cultivation, and initiated the first drainage and reclamation work in southwest Louisiana. He made the first attempt to interest homemakers in the lands of this section, and by his liberal advertising and unique methods, brought hundreds of new citizens here, laying the foundation for a great increase in population and wealth.¹⁶ Judge Wells later told the story of J. B. Watkins expending \$2,000 in one-cent stamps for sending advertising literature through the mails. Mr. Watkins sent a boy to the post office for \$1,000 of one-cent stamps. The postmistress, Mrs. Leveque, told him he must have misunderstood his employer; the boy returned to Mr. Watkins who sent him back to make the same request. Lake Charles could not supply such a sale of stamps and they had to be procured from New Orleans.¹⁷

Between the years 1880 and 1890 the census report showed a change from 12,484 to 20,176, and the lumber industry was responsible for the greater part of this growth. Settlers came from everywhere; Dr. Seaman Knapp from Iowa, cultured men from Virginia and the Carolinas, exiled Acadians, who led a simple life, adventurers from Virginia, backwoodsmen from Mississippi, Kentucky, and Tennessee, Yankees from Maine and Ohio, and immigrants from Germany, Ireland, Scotland, Sweden, Spain, France, and England.¹⁸

S. L. Cary, in a letter from Jennings, Louisiana, in 1895, said: "People from the North, principally from Iowa, had acquired a block of land 5 x 24 miles in the vicinity of Jennings, by homestead generally, and there was yet much land about here subject

¹⁶ *Lake Charles Daily Press*, 1895. Special Edition.

¹⁷ Miss Maude Reid's Scrap Book.

¹⁸ *Lake Charles Daily Press*, June 2, 1895.

to entry besides a large amount of Spanish Grants that could be bought for \$1.25 to \$7 per acre."¹⁹ What was true of Jennings could be said of many other places in Calcasieu Parish.

The North American Land and Timber Company was organized in 1882 and was of the utmost benefit in developing this section of the state. The company was an English syndicate with an office in London, but was managed in Lake Charles by a most competent representative who did a great work in helping the people get good farms and homes, meanwhile making dividends for his company. The company was originally formed to buy timber lands, but finding that the government had quite a body of land on the market, they decided to buy agricultural lands instead. It was due to their enterprise and to the vast sums of money they expended in this section, that a great tract of rich land was reclaimed and put into cultivation, thus helping materially in the development of the parish. From their original holdings of about 900,000 acres, 200,000 acres had been redeemed and converted into fertile farms by 1911. This land has been sold to settlers and two towns have been built up—Manchester and Holmwood, both of which are flourishing villages with schools and churches.²⁰ It was the policy of the North American Land and Timber Company to redeem the land by a system of dredging and canals. The first year after the land had been redeemed the company put it in cultivation and its worth was proved to the settler before he was given an opportunity to buy it. By an extensive system of drainage canals, thousands of acres have been reclaimed and are now producing fine crops each year.²¹

The percentage of gain in population in two decades shows a greater increase than for any other parish in the state. From 1890 to 1910 the population increased from 20,176 to 62,767, approximately 211 per cent.²² Analysis of the census reports show that this increase is due to the large number of farmers and people moving into the parish from other countries and states, as well as a natural increase in population among the natives. The developments in oil fields, rice and lumber all play an important role in the growth of Calcasieu.

²⁰ *Lake Charles' Commercial and Industrial Advantages*, 1910.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Lake Charles American Press*, December 10, 1911.

¹⁹ *Lake Charles American Press*, June 28, 1916.

The following table is taken from the *United States Census Reports* for the years 1840-1910:

Year	Population	Free white persons	Free colored persons	Slaves	Born out of the state	Foreign born	Total native born	Indians	Indians, Chinese, Japanese and others
1840	2,057	738	226	483					
1850	3,914	2,718	239	957	233	33			
1860	5,928	4,452	305	1,171	323	100	4,657		
1870	6,733	5,171	1,457		859	125	6,608	105	
1880	12,484	9,919	2,407			314	12,170	158	
1890	20,176	16,834	3,194			844	19,332	148	
1900	30,428	24,267	5,966			1,114	29,314	191	
1910	62,767	45,884	16,562			3,268			321

CHAPTER VII

TOWNS AND VILLAGES

The following chart, taken from the *United States Census Reports*, will show the towns and their populations:

	1880	1890	1900	1910
Lake Charles	838	3,442	6,680	11,449
Jennings		412	1,539	3,925
Welsh		200	320	1,250
De Ridder				2,100

Marion

To establish a seat of justice in 1840 was an important task for the police jury; each member should designate a point which he thought would be best. William Perkins designated the town of

Lisbon on the west side of Calcasieu River; Michel Pithon, Comasque Bluff on the east side of the river. Others suggested Marsh Bayou Bluff and Joseph Fault's Bluff. The voting showed that Marsh Bayou Bluff and Lisbon received the same number of votes. There being a tie, the president gave his vote to Marsh Bayou Bluff.¹ On December 8, 1841, the police jury resolved that the name of Marion be given to the parish seat.² Old residents tell that it was named in honor of General Charles Francis Marion, "the Swamp Fox", who fought during the Revolutionary War.³ A more beautiful spot could hardly have been chosen. It is about fifteen miles from Lake Charles, where the Calcasieu River curved in a peculiarly crooked course from the northwest, and took a sudden notion at a point about seven miles northeast of the lake to run nearly due west with a slight sweeping outward curve on the south side. The land for a considerable distance back from the swamp was high and well-drained. In the early days it was covered by longleaf pine forests. For a long stretch the highland came to the water's edge, so we find a beautiful river bank. Marion was used as a stopping place by cattle drivers passing from Texas to New Orleans. Boats on the river gave it cheap but slow communication with the outside world.⁴ Many inhabitants know it today as Old Town.

Marion grew very slowly and it was proposed that the parish seat be moved to a more progressive place. The "Old Town" people were quick to see the advantages of the settlement on the lake by Charles Sallier. Jacob Ryan, the sheriff of the parish and a mighty figure in upholding the law, appears to have been one of the first to propose removing the parish seat from Marion to Charley's lake.

Mr. Ryan, aided by Samuel A. Kirby and his famous slave, Uncle George, put the courthouse on wheels and dragged it to the river's edge. It was then placed on a raft, the jail following, and carried down the river to the present site where the courthouse now stands.⁵ After this there was little left of Marion, and Mr. Perrin, in his *Southwest Louisiana*, describes it: "The finger

¹ Calcasieu Police Jury Minutes, 1841-1846, pp. 4-5.

² *Ibid.*, 61-67.

³ *Lake Charles American Press*, January 9, 1933.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, November 4, 1931.

of time has written 'Ichabod' above her gates, and like ancient Rome, the spider weaves its web in her palaces, the owl sings watchsongs in her towers."⁶

Lake Charles

The city was named for one of its very early inhabitants, Charles Sallier, whose farm was near the southeast side of the lake where the Shell Beach Drive and the Sallier cemetery are now. In pioneer places and especially among pioneers of his blood, people are rarely given their full names in conversation, so he became Joseph Charles, or, more often, Jo Charlie, and to the wayfarers along the trail and along the coast region, Charlie's place and Charlie's lake were familiar words. When the village came, they naturally accepted the name, as it was already established, and called it Lake Charles.⁷

Charles Sallier was certainly a colonizer of more than passing talent; he was master of the territory about the lake whose edges flashed with purple water hyacinths, and whose banks furnished a sombre background of southern oaks. He developed large areas of real estate, some of which are still occupied by his descendants. He had a plantation home, on the present Sallier Street, which more than a century ago was the regulation "Big House", with its cluster of barns, sheds, slave cabins, and all the other surroundings of a prosperous pioneer plantation.⁸

The industrial life was mainly trading, farming, and cattle raising. It was a custom to go once a year to New Orleans to sell cattle and to get the few household articles, such as calico, gunpowder, and flour.

The history of a community is so closely interwoven with the lives of the people who have made it, with their problems, struggles, joys, ambitions, and hopes. The life of Jacob Ryan will reach past the beginning so far as Lake Charles is concerned. He came to this parish when he was but one year old, in 1817. He was born at Perry's Bridge on the Vermillion River, February 14, 1816. His father, after whom he was named, was a planter and stock raiser, who lived in Calcasieu until his death. Jacob Jr., known as the "father of Lake Charles", was the son who moved

⁶ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 126.

⁷ *Lake Charles American Press*, March 24, 1933.

⁸ Interview with Cecelia Guintard.

from the prairies of west Calcasieu and lived for a time in the pine woods about six miles east of the present town of Dequincy, but in 1850 he moved to Lake Charles. Full of energy, he followed whatever occupation presented itself as honorable and lucrative—planter, stockraiser, mill owner, merchant, and contractor. In each of these he was successful.⁹

In 1837 Thomas Bilbo bought from James Barnett all the land from Hodges Street to Lake Front and from Pujo with some swampland up to the river, in all 640 acres in the heart of Lake Charles, for \$500. Thomas Bilbo, who came from Canada, first spelled his name Bilbeaux, but changed to the English way of spelling. The old homestead on the lake, two stories high, was built of unhewn logs put together in tongue and groove fashion, and contained fifteen rooms, most of them small, with a "dog run" down the center of a hallway, used by the family pets in bad weather. Guns and deer antlers hung on its walls, and buck hide lay on the floor.

Bilbo and James Hodges were early merchants of Lake Charles. In the early thirties they opened a store on what is now the southeast corner of Hodges and Beldon streets. They supplied the simple wants of the pioneers and engaged in trading with the Indians when they came to the village. Bilbo died September 20, 1846. He and Mr. Hodges were ancestors of Mrs. Molden who is the last living representative of the Bilbo family; and Mrs. Molden says that her mother told her the Indians camped along the gully that ran from Hodges to the old Bilbo home on the lake. This is the gully that the children of early Lake Charles found such an excellent crayfish ground. It was a long, narrow building, unpainted, save that Time had painted it a deep gray. It survived many generations of tenants, both white and black, before it was turned into a blacksmith shop, then a garage, and finally torn down to make way for a modern building.¹⁰

James Hodges, sometime in the late 'fifties, built a home near the corner of Hodges and Pujo streets. It is now the annex to the First Baptist Church. It was in this house in 1855 that his daughter Elmira, aged thirteen, was married to Joseph Bilbo, the son of his partner, and went to live in the old Bilbo home on the lake that had for many years before served, so tradition says, as a military post for United States soldiers.

⁹ *Lake Charles American Press*, February 1, 1917.

¹⁰ Interview with George W. Ryan, 1928.

Mrs. Ben Kirkman was one of James Hodges' daughters. There was also a son, "Bo" Hodges, who was married at the age of fourteen to the girl who was thirteen, and to this couple were born twelve children. When he died a few years ago, he left fifty-four grandchildren. His home is near Gillis, at Hodgeville, Louisiana.¹¹

William Hutchins came to Calcasieu in the summer of 1857, from St. Martinville, Louisiana, in three wagons drawn by six large white mules. Prior to this move he had owned the *Gazette* press in Opelousas, Louisiana, and he moved it to Lake Charles, thinking it would grow as the town grew. When he came to Lake Charles, there were only twelve houses in the town.¹²

Samuel Adams Kirby, a native of the state of Vermont, and a graduate of the law school of Middlebury College, Vermont, was forced South by the ravages of tuberculosis. After he received his diploma as a lawyer, his family, acting upon the advice of physicians, sent him as far south as possible. Equipped with a few hundred dollars and his diploma, he located in Shreveport, where he met and married Martha Caroline Dial, a seventeen-year-old student from a female seminary of South Carolina, who was visiting her brother in Shreveport. Shortly after his marriage his health became so impaired that he could only deliver his speeches in a whisper. After consulting with the celebrated doctors, Stone and Stone of New Orleans, he was ordered at once to go farther south and get nearer the salt sea air. Then with his young wife and child he came directly to southwest Louisiana. After making a purchase of one hundred and fifty acres of land from an old French settler, Michel Pichou, the land lying south of what is now Pujo Street and bordering on the lake opening back as far as Common Street, he proceeded to build and locate a town. He was quick to see the advantages of water facilities, for at that time huge three-masted schooners could enter through the pass at Cameron, since the mouth of the river came up to the landings near the place.

Through his efforts in the legislature at Baton Rouge, where he did most of his law practice, Mr. Kirby was one of those to aid in bringing the courthouse from Marion to Lake Charles. It was a double log structure, and he and Mr. Ryan assisted

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

in the moving of the house. It was placed on a piece of ground one hundred and twenty-nine feet by five hundred feet, which Mr. Kirby donated.

Being very tenacious of life, and longing to live as he was yet a young man, in order to improve his health he decided to get nearer the Gulf and went down the river. Here he bought a large tract of land where Leesburg now stands, placing his Negroes on his farm under an overseer by the name of Sims. He had the land cultivated, staying there as much as he could so that he might receive the benefit of the salt air, hoping thus to prolong his life.

Through Mr. Kirby's donations, many buildings were constructed and his efforts can be seen in Lake Charles today.¹³

As settlers could easily see that logging could be handled more easily at Charley's lake, they began to move to the present site of Lake Charles. Sawmilling became a very important part in the upbuilding of the town. Records show that in 1857 forty acres of land between Hodges Street and Louisiana Avenue and between Lawrence and Pujo streets were sold for \$297. That same year the Catholics purchased from S. M. Pithou the front half of the block facing Ryan Street, between Gordon's Drug Store and filling station, on the corner, for \$375.¹⁴ Afterwards this property was sold, and now it is a business section of the town.

The population of Lake Charles increased as the sawmill industry grew, and by 1857 Lake Charles was ready to be incorporated. It is frequently stated that the town was established as "Charleston", and later changed, but the records at Washington show that a post office was established in Calcasieu County, Louisiana, under the name of Lake Charles, with John Hayes as postmaster, October 4, 1850, and has continued under that name until the present time.¹⁵ The act incorporating the town was signed March 16, 1867.¹⁶

When the Civil War days came, there was established a camp in the northern part of the city. Calcasieu responded to the call for arms and displayed a great deal of patriotism. Lumber

¹³ Interview with Mary Kirby Bunker.

¹⁴ *Lake Charles American Press*, January 8, 1914.

¹⁵ Letter, Charles E. Cary, Acting Assistant Postmaster-General, to the author, October 28, 1932.

¹⁶ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 150.

and food supplies were given to the Confederate soldiers. Captain Goos aided in feeding the families left by the soldiers in Lake Charles. Food was distributed when it was needed. After the federal blockade became effective, the Goos schooners were converted into blockade-runners. These schooners took out lumber and brought back flour, coffee, and clothing.

Mr. Ryan tells the story of the bombardment of Lake Charles during this period. One day Mr. Ryan's little mill was busy turning out lumber, when suddenly a sailing launch made its appearance on the river and took its position near the center of the lake, hoisted Old Glory, and turned loose a three-pounder at the mill. Another shot came bouncing along after the first and with this the hands seemed to lose interest in their work. The third shot came, and the workmen took to their prayers and lumber piles. The Yankee boat took five shots at the mill and hit all around it, then sailed up to the wharf and in a martial tone demanded beef and potatoes. They got both; Mr. Ryan poked from under the lumber piles two or three ash-gray darkies, and a beef was killed in double-quick time.¹⁷

Another story is told of two Federal gunboats, the *Granite City* and the *Wane*, which came up Calcasieu River and were captured by Green's Brigade. These boats had sick and wounded men of both sides, and they were brought into Lake Charles. Some of the people objected to the Federal men being brought into the town, but Dr. Verneulen, the physician of the boats, objected to his sick being separated. Daniel Goos ordered every man "Yank or Rebel", taken to Goosport where a long room with white-washed walls, cots and bedding were supplied.¹⁸

Lake Charles was never surveyed and laid out as other town sites. Many of the streets are still crooked, having originated from old paths.

The first city council minutes, after the city was incorporated, state: July 6, 1868: mayor, J. W. Ryan; alderman, Dr. W. H. Kirkman, R. B. Stoddard, W. G. Kibber, J. B. Kirkman, J. L. Bilbo; July 25, 1868, first business transacted. Jacob Ryan, treasurer; John Spence, town secretary; M. J. Rosteet, town collector; Pat Fitzgerald, town constable; George H. Wells, town attorney.¹⁹

¹⁷ *Lake Charles American Press*, February 1, 1917.

¹⁸ *Lake Charles Daily Press*, Special Edition, June, 1895.

¹⁹ *Beaumont Enterprise*, May 1, 1920.

Judge Wells says that when he arrived in Lake Charles about this time, there was one store, Paul Pujo's, on the lake front at the junction of what is now Front and North, with merchandise worth less than \$100; only one sawmill was in operation; and at the first general election, April, 1868, only 461 votes were cast in the entire parish, which was at that time larger than the state of Delaware and nearly as large as the state of Connecticut.²⁰

In 1852 the police jury gave permission to Jacob Ryan to build a new courthouse in Lake Charles, instead of removing the courthouse from Marion. The new building was to be of the following dimensions and materials: length, thirty-six feet; width, thirty feet; between the floors, eleven feet; height of upper story, seven feet; two rooms twelve feet long and ten feet wide in one end of the lower story; ten windows with glass lights, twelve lights in each window 8" x 10"; doors, windows, and shutters to be made of good cypress, hung on hinges and fastened with hooks and locks. Floors both above and below were to be jointed but not dressed. The outside was to be weatherboarded with cypress planks, and the inside was to be ceiled. There were to be four windows in the upper story, with cypress shutters. There was to be the judge's bench, and four benches or seats for use of said courthouse. The whole was to be built and completed for the amount of the commutation tax, which was between \$500 and \$525.²¹ However, this courthouse was not built until 1872.

An interesting description of the jail in Lake Charles was given as: dimensions, twenty feet square, consisting of two stories. The most recalcitrant prisoners were placed downstairs in cells, which resembled a dungeon. The prisoners were admitted to the lower floor by a ladder and a trap door. The entrance of the jail was by stairs that ran up the outside of the building. After the deputy took them down the ladder, he would pull it up to the second floor and fasten down the trap door to prevent the escape of prisoners. Those prisoners of less danger were placed upstairs.²²

Sanitation was begun early. Records of the first organized attempt at general improvements, January 25, 1875, state that a committee be appointed whose duty it should be to inspect streets, especially with reference to drainage thereof, and report the needs

²⁰ Miss Maude Reid's Scrap Book.

²¹ Calcasieu Police Jury Minutes, 1852, p. 79.

²² Miss Maude Reid's Scrap Book.

to the police jury.²³ Later, on February 19, 1879, we find the council recommending that the building of sidewalks would be too expensive and advised a causeway to be built across the marsh on Broad and Hodges streets.²⁴ This is the present location of the post office building.

The people of Lake Charles were very pleased in 1879 with the coming of the railroad. Steel rails had been delivered at the docks and 100 piles driven in the Calcasieu River for the railroad bridge.²⁵ The dreams of a railroad seemed to be coming true.

In the early eighties Lake Charles began to prosper. The federal government opened the public land that sold for \$1.25 per acre, and the eastern capitalists, not slow in seeing the millions in the pines, bought vast acres of land. In 1883 the North American Land and Timber Company purchased a large amount of land and began a systematic advertising of the country to attract immigration and capital. Lake Charles was then a mere village, with no support other than sawmills.

Settlers came from everywhere. The *American*, a weekly newspaper of sixteen pages, was established in Lake Charles. It is impossible to estimate the work accomplished by this paper; in addition to its weekly editions, it printed many times editions of 50,000 to 100,000 copies containing special information for the inducement of immigration.²⁶

In 1892 and 1893 the company fitted an exhibit car, filled with products from this section, and sent it through Kansas, Iowa, Illinois, as an advertisement for this country. The result of this enterprise was untold; hundreds of our best citizens were first attracted to Lake Charles in this way.²⁷

O. S. Dolby says that in August, 1889, he awoke in Lake Charles' old Walter Hotel, where he had been conducted in the night by the well-known Caceauz, that kindhearted, every-ready hackman, famous in his time for getting business. At that time he describes Ryan Street as simply a country road so far as improvements and general appearance were concerned. The only approach to a sidewalk was in front of the United States Hotel at the corner of Ryan and Iris streets, where Mr. McGinty

²³ Calcasieu Police Jury Minutes, January 25, 1875.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, February 19, 1879.

²⁵ *Echo* (Lake Charles), July 2, 1879.

²⁶ *Lake Charles Daily Press*, Special Edition, 1895.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

had constructed some sixty feet of plank side-walk. At the corner of Ryan and Pujo streets was the combination store of William Myer, who resided there and ran a drugstore across the corner, where Gordon's drugstore now is. On the corner, where the Calcasieu National Bank is now located, then stood a small wooden structure occupied by a grocery store. Where the Rig-
maiden Hotel now stands, then stood the Lyons' Home, a hotel set back some thirty feet from the street. The site of the present Commercial Block was then the home of Casper Schindler, an old and respected citizen. That portion of the Kaufman Building just north of the Lake City Hotel was then occupied by the home of Dr. Munday. George Ryan was then living where the Murray-Brooks Hardware Store is now located. Ryan Street, further north than the corner of Division, was a residence street. A large pine stump, cut as low as it is convenient to cut a tree, was standing in the sidewalk in front of the present Chavanne Building. Some of the cross streets further north were merely opened. At the corner of Pine and Bilbo there was a pine woods, and it is related that once a citizen was held up and robbed while on his way home one night through this lonely spot. The Southern Pacific was the only railroad here at that time, and the depot was an old barn-like structure, a combination of freight and passenger depot, standing a little east of Kirkman Street, and passengers coming and going to or from town were carried by the hackmen. There was little attempt to improve the streets and sidewalks. The only sidewalk other than the above mentioned was the short stretch in front of the residences of Professors Knapp and Thomson.

The front part of the present parish jail was then built and in use. This was the only brick building in the city. The building of the old Lake City Saloon by Mr. Touchy was started during the winter of 1889-1890, and was the first brick building for commercial purposes in the city. This was soon followed by the brick veneering on the building at the northeast corner of Ryan and Division streets.²⁸

In 1890 a new courthouse was constructed of brick.²⁹ Directly in front of the courthouse stood an old fire department house, which was also the city hall, and was moved from there soon after the building of the brick courthouse in 1890.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

In 1892 the Calcasieu Bank built its splendid structure, and L. Kaufman erected the brick building on the southeast corner of Broad and Ryan streets. A feature worthy of mention is the fact that the Calcasieu Bank built a building which in design and cost was ahead of the times as most people thought, but time has shown the wisdom of its management. It set the pace for a better class of buildings. It was the first faced with pressed bricks, and the example set by it has been followed by all builders of brick mercantile houses.³⁰

At that time four churches were in Lake Charles: Catholic, Baptist, Methodist Episcopal, South, and the Episcopal. The Methodist Church was at the corner of Bilbo and Broad streets. The Baptist Church was on Pujo and Hodges, and the former church of the Episcopalians has been moved to the eastern part of the city and is now occupied as a Negro church.³¹

In the fall of 1890 a public school building was erected at the present site of Central School, and during the same year Lake Charles College was constructed, the latter being a three-story building fifty-five by eighty-five feet.³²

In 1903 great industrial progress was made. One of the largest real estate transactions was when Swift and Kirkwood sold to the Calcasieu Real Estate Company the northeast corner of Ryan and Division streets with a hundred-foot front on Ryan Street, for \$23,000.³³ Several new buildings were constructed that year, for instance, the Reams and Hollins Building and the Rigmaiden Hotel.³⁴

In the year 1905 very little progress was made. The yellow fever epidemic was sweeping over Louisiana and ruining business. However, the depression of the year 1905 soon disappeared and Lake Charles showed steady growth. Sewerage and paving programs were passed, the rice mills were now in running order, and more lumber was being shipped from Lake Charles than from any other city in the South.³⁵ It was predicted by the president of the Hibernia Bank and Trust Company that Lake Charles would have a population of 25,000 within a period of five years.³⁶ Other businessmen said it was destined to become a real city.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Perrin, *op. cit.*, 148.

³³ *Lake Charles American*, January 28, 1903.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, July 2, 1907.

³⁶ *Lake Charles Daily Press*, September 2, 1907.

During the years 1907-1909 the panic had its effects upon Lake Charles. On April 23, 1910, the little city suffered a great loss due to a fire, which started about three-thirty one Saturday afternoon, originating in the Opera House and causing property damages of \$750,000. The people met the disaster very bravely and started rebuilding immediately.

In twenty years the city increased its population by 8,178, or 104 per cent. The population in 1890 was 5,771; in 1910, 13,949. The development in rice, and lumber accounts for most of this growth.

The post office records are an indication of the growth and development of any community, and the following table shows the growth of Lake Charles.³⁷

Year	Class	Gross Receipts	Salary	Net Revenue
1884	3	\$ 2,998.06	\$1,325	\$ 1,543.06
1885	3	2,923.06	1,300	1,464.73
1886	3	2,709.56	1,400	1,559.56
1887	3	4,711.35	1,200	3,359.19
1888	3	4,256.66	1,600	2,491.12
1890	3	4,697.32	1,600	2,676.29
1891	3	5,517.21	1,600	3,430.99
1892	3	5,640.86	1,700	3,325.90
1893	3	7,262.05	1,700	4,940.79
1895	2	9,349.47	2,000	5,879.93
1896	2	9,893.60	2,100	6,277.30
1897	2	9,623.48	2,200	5,649.15
1898	2	9,949.38	2,100	6,052.72
1899	2	11,246.20	2,100	7,144.39
1903	2	21,043.77	2,500	11,293.09
1904	2	21,725.24	2,600	-----
1905	2	23,172.80	2,600	-----
1909	2	33,598.00	2,600	-----

Sugartown

Sugartown, or Seventh Ward, is about twenty-five miles square, bounded south by Barnes Creek and north by Vernon Parish. The following story is told of how Sugartown got its name. Bob Martin, a settler, obtained a few stalks of sugar cane from

³⁷ United States Postmaster-General, *Reports*, 1884-1909.

St. Mary Parish. He planted it, saved what it produced, and repeated this about three years. When he had about an eighth of an acre of good cane, he remarked to his neighbor, Saddler Johnson, the saddle and harness maker, that if he had a way of getting the juice from the cane, he would make some good syrup. Saddler Johnson, being a skilled mechanic, said, "Bob, let's make a mill by taking two short sections of a big gum tree and turning them with a lathe until they are uniform. We will fit cogs into them so they can be turned with a lever, and we'll then squeeze the juice out that way." This was done and a small furnace was built. Wash kettles were used for boiling the syrup, and as neither of the men was familiar with making syrup, they permitted it to boil too long. When the liquid cooled, they had, instead of syrup, two or three nice kettles of sugar.

Presently, when they got up the petition for a post office, it became necessary to name the settlement. Some one with Bob Martin's sugar in mind, said, "Let's name the place Sugartown." It has been called that ever since. The post office was a mile from the present one in the C. B. Caraway place. Alexandria Verne was the first postmaster.³⁸

This territory was heavily timbered with longleaf pine and near the creeks were found oak, beech, hickory, maple, magnolia, and other hardwoods which could be used for manufacturing furniture and farm implements. Numerous creeks were near and were used for the lumber business. Timber was cut, hauled to the banks, and put into the water and conveyed to the mills of Lake Charles where it was sawed.³⁹

Among the successful settlers of Sugartown was J. L. Lyons, who was engaged in the farming and lumbering business. He owned a steam cotton gin, gristmill and sawmill combined.⁴⁰ G. W. Cockran was another very old citizen who gave his attention to sheep raising.⁴¹

Vinton

In the early 'eighties Vinton was known as Blair, named for a family who resided in the state of Iowa and owned a large

³⁸ *Beaumont Enterprise*, May 1, 1920.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 163.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 168.

tract of land here. Later the name was changed to Vinton by Professor Knapp, being named after a town in Iowa from which a number of settlers came.⁴²

The original Old Spanish Trail did not run through the town, but passed near the Big Woods community and crossed the river at Niblett's Bluff.

The first man to open a place of business here was Mr. Melwick. He prospered and kept adding to his establishment. The bottom floor comprised the post office, merchandise store, saloon, and living quarters; upstairs was a large hall used for church. It is related that when reference was made to changing the name of the town he became enraged and it preyed on his mind so that he lost complete control of his faculties, and one day in a fit of insanity he killed his wife and two children, set the building on fire, and shot himself. The place, together with the bodies, was burned to ashes, leaving the town bare.⁴³

The first schoolhouse was built by Mark Simmons of Liberty County, Texas, about 1880; he was the first teacher. The first public school teacher was Miss Mabel King of Iowa. She is now Mrs. Kelly of Lake Charles, and is very prominent in the city.⁴⁴

Vinton has a position of commanding commercial importance, only six miles to the Sabine, navigable for three hundred miles, and with the bar at the mouth improved for the passage of ocean steamers, and nine miles of tide water on Bayou Choupique, which flows into the Calcasieu River. North is a forest of yellow pine, where C. P. Hampton has erected a large sawmill.⁴⁵

In 1910 the town was incorporated, with Alexander Perry as mayor.⁴⁶

After all, it is the men who make the place. Calcasieu Parish has produced many men who have engraved their names in the history of this section, and men who will be remembered. One man who stands out in bold relief is John Geddings Gray. He came from that old South Carolina stock which knows no failure, and after having once attained the pinnacle of success in his undertaking, he devoted the latter period of his life in

⁴² *Lake Charles American Press*, November 4, 1933.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

returning to the land that gave him wealth by leading the way for others to make money, by his leadership in the erection of public buildings, and by education of the young.

John Geddings Gray, the stock raiser, ranchman, rice and cotton planter, and oil producer, was born in Winston County, Mississippi, February 8, 1849. He was the son of Dr. Reuben F. and Francis Chiles Gray, both natives of South Carolina. The Gray family became prominent before the Civil War and played an important part in it. Hon. Henry Gray, an uncle of John Geddings Gray, played an important role in the lawmaking halls of the State of Mississippi.

Dr. Reuben F. Gray received a thorough college education in the University of Baltimore, Maryland. After his graduation, he studied medicine under Dr. Eli Geddings of Baltimore. After a preparatory course in reading under Dr. Geddings, the young man then entered the medical college in the city. Between Dr. Gray and his preceptor there grew an everlasting friendship, which accounts for the name of Geddings borne by John, having been conferred as an honor on his son.

Dr. Gray married Miss Chiles in 1839. He practiced in South Carolina and Mississippi until 1851, when he moved to Bienville Parish, Louisiana. Dr. Gray then moved to St. Landry Parish. In February, 1869, the family moved to Lake Charles where Dr. Gray was greatly loved.

John Geddings Gray, like all southern youths, received his daily education in the old-field schoolhouse, where Webster's blue-back speller and the teacher and the rod held full sway. He attended Soulé's Business and Literary College. He became interested in timber and logging operations and continued this until 1901. The life of a timber man requires his entire attention, but Mr. Gray had time to engage in land surveying and served as clerk of the parish court. While engaged in the surveying business, his attention was directed to the possibilities of Calcasieu Parish in an agricultural way, and having faith in the fertility of the soil, he invested heavily in the lands and owned thousands of acres. Mr. Gray moved to Vinton on a ranch a few miles southwest of the town. On June 7, 1880, at Lake Charles he married Miss Mary F. Kirkman.

Dr. Gray did a great work for charity. He assisted many schools in his section—more than one schoolhouse was built by John Geddings Gray and given to the public. Nothing gave him more pleasure than to assist some young man or woman to procure an education, asking in return that they become useful to the community in which they lived. Mr. Gray was also willing to help a congregation build a new house of worship.

His home is a typical southern mansion with a wealth of shade trees, well-kept lawns, and a flower bed here and there to break the monotony and lend cheer to the scene. The home and grounds have an air of southern hospitality, wide porches, and inspiring columns. The inside is in keeping with the outside appearance—the rooms are large, airy, and beautiful.

To supply his vast acreage with sufficient moisture and to insure irrigation for his rice when needed, Mr. Gray had constructed the Sabine Canal, taking the waters from the Sabine River and turning them into a channel, harnessing them so that mankind might be fed. This canal was several miles in length and had a gravity of twelve feet.⁴⁷

Iowa

The little town of Iowa was named for a group of energetic and progressive men from the state of Iowa, headed by the well-known Professor Knapp, who located here in 1882 and took it upon themselves to build up and develop this country. It was interesting to hear some of these first settlers relate their experiences in this section. One states that the natives had never seen a wire fence and objected very much to the erection of fences, as their droves of cattle could not be driven through the prairies. It was only after a number of years of persuasion that they gradually gave in and saw the good and the necessity of wire fences. One man said that when he arrived in Iowa, it was bitter cold and he was annoyed to see the natives barefooted and wearing straw hats and overcoats.⁴⁸

Mr. Storer, a northern man who today is spoken of in high praise, was the first storekeeper and postmaster.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Special Edition, 1911.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, October 21, 1933.

Welsh

In the early 'eighties Miles Welsh and his family left St. Landry Parish and traveled westward for several days before they came to Calcasieu. At a certain little prairie spot surrounded by gullies Miles Welsh thought it an ideal place for a camp. He decided to pitch his tent, and the longer he stayed the better he liked the place; and very soon began the erection of a house. The building was of logs, plastered with mud, having a mud chimney, and the windows were wooden shutters. All the cooking was done on the fireplace, and all the furniture was homemade. The stagecoach running from Opelousas to Lake Charles stopped at the Welsh home, and strangers were treated most courteously and given a hearty welcome as the coachman was supposed to bring in news from the outside world.⁴⁹

Rice was sown in small patches, reaped by hand with a sickle, threshed by hand, pounded with a pestle in a mortar, and then it was ready for cooking.

Miles Welsh had a son, Henry, and the Welsh family are largely responsible for the foundation and development of the town. It was Henry Welsh who gave his name to the town.⁵⁰

Welsh was half a mile from the Lacassine, a wooded stream flowing south to the Gulf; and this Lacassine country, as this section was often called, was visited yearly by the different tribes of Indians, the Choctaws, Attakapas, and others. Wild fowl and animals were here in large numbers. The Indians called this their "hunting ground", or, in the Choctaw language, "La Cassine".⁵¹

The town of Welsh was surveyed and platted in 1884. In April, the Messrs. Jasinsky and Reiner of Iowa, and George D. Moore, of the same state, visited Welsh, and charmed with its location and surroundings, purchased land.

The town was incorporated in April, 1888, and Henry Welsh was elected the first mayor, an honor appropriately conferred, he having been the founder of the town.⁵² It was he who gave the right-of-way through his land for the Louisiana Western Railroad

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Perrin, *op. cit.*, 160.

and donated the land for the erection of a station with the understanding that all trains passing through were to stop. Until recently this agreement was enforced.

Rice and hay were the principal farm products, although sugar cane, cotton, Irish and sweet potatoes, oats, and corn were grown.

Nathaniel Prentice, planter, was born in Vermont, in February, 1823. He was engaged in farming in Wisconsin and Iowa until 1886, when he moved to Calcasieu and purchased a tract of land containing 3,700 acres, known as the "Hawkeye Ranch". Over 200 acres of this land were cultivated in rice, to which it was well adapted. Mr. Prentice took an active part in local affairs in Welsh.⁵³ A physician to be remembered is Dr. Zawaochy. He was born in Poland on July 25, 1828, and in 1880 located in Welsh. He was a prominent man in the community, and took an active part in the Masonic fraternity.⁵⁴ Another planter of Welsh was Joseph A. Anderson, born in New Jersey, September 3, 1845. After the Civil War he came to Calcasieu and purchased a farm of 320 acres. He gave his attention to rice growing, in which he was very successful.⁵⁵

Sulphur

Twelve miles west of Lake Charles, the discovery of sulphur added materially to the development of the section to be known as Sulphur City. In 1858 a well was sunk for oil and a sulphur dome was discovered, but it was not until 1894 that sulphur was produced, as each company in turn failed with the project.

Sulphur City was at an early date interested in educational facilities. The first schoolteacher here, in 1889, was Professor Mathews, who was followed by Miss Mollie Jenkins. It is said that the frame building was fifteen by twenty feet and the enrollment was fifteen pupils.⁵⁶ George Root, who had a family of fourteen children, enrolled ten of them, but a few weeks later he became dissatisfied for some reason and took the children off the register. This practically closed the school, but after solicitation of friends, Mr. Root returned the children to their classes and saved the school.⁵⁷

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 172.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 200.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁵⁶ *Lake Charles American Press*, November 4, 1933.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

Jennings

The most important town in the parish, outside of Lake Charles, was Jennings. It was settled by people from the Northwest, who were very enterprising and came to this section because of its farming lands. Jennings stood in the midst of a fine rice country. The population in 1880 was only twenty-five inhabitants.⁵⁸

The first newspaper in this town was the *Jennings Reporter*, edited and published by Messrs. Cary and Son, 1889.⁵⁹

The question of creating a new parish in this part of Calcasieu was spoken of as early as 1885, but no serious thought was given the matter until 1886 when the people of Jennings, then a town of almost half a thousand inhabitants, petitioned the legislature to create a parish. This showed that Jennings was growing and wished to flourish as the new parish seat. However, this division did not come until 1912.

The Jennings oil boom of 1900-1905 greatly influenced its growth. Many inhabitants came to "get rich quick." The *United States Census Reports* show an increase in population from 412 in 1890, to 1,539 in 1900.

In 1897 Jennings was listed as a third class postoffice. The following table will indicate its steady growth.⁶⁰

Year	Class	Gross Receipts
1897.....	3	\$1,691.70
1898.....	3	2,448.61
1899.....	3	2,923.86
1900.....	3	3,293.61
1901.....	3	4,423.80
1903.....	3	8,211.28
1904.....	2	8,196.03
1905.....	2	8,205.83

In reviewing the lives of some of the settlers of Jennings, we notice some interesting facts concerning the progress of the town.

⁵⁸ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 159.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ United States Postmaster-General, *Reports*, 1887-1905.

D. D. Andrews was born October 7, 1832. His parents were natives of Calcasieu and St. Martin parishes. He began his early career as a planter and owned many acres of rich land, upon which he raised a variety of products and a large number of stock. In 1890 he had on his plantation more than 300 head of cattle and 150 horses. Mr. Andrews was also interested in the mercantile business at Jennings and Lake Arthur.⁶¹

S. L. Cary was born in Boston, Erie County, New York, in 1827. He received a good business education, and at the age of twenty-one he began a mercantile business in New York. In 1853 Cary moved to Freeport, Illinois, and in 1883 he moved to Jennings. He took a homestead and tree claim where the town of Jennings now is. Interested in the cultivation of rice, he had over one hundred acres in this crop. He was northern immigration agent for the Southern Pacific Railroad, with an office in Manchester, Iowa. Mr. Cary was instrumental in inducing much of the immigration to Jennings, and was known as the "Joshua" of the Iowa colony, since he was the first northern settler in this location.⁶²

A. D. McFarlan may be called the founder of Jennings, as he erected the first store in the town. He engaged in business and was very successful, being one of the largest property holders of the town. He owned and operated a sawmill and a shingle mill with a capacity of 35,000 shingles a day. He cultivated rice on an extensive scale, planting about 1,000 acres annually. In local affairs he was also well known.⁶³

West Lake

Bryan, Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, was established August 11, 1885, with William Perkins as postmaster. The name of the office was changed to West Lake, Louisiana, January 31, 1889, and Frederick G. Perkins became the postmaster.⁶⁴ This little town is situated on the west bank of the lake.

The most prominent business places were the stores of A. J. Perkins and W. B. Morris. Charles Miller was a prominent man of the firm of Perkins and Miller, and was a valuable citizen to

⁶¹ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 159.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 145-146.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ Letter from Charles E. Cary, Acting Assistant Postmaster-General, October 28, 1932.

the community. He was born October 15, 1846, in Sweden, and educated in that country. At a very early age he entered the machine shops at Stockholm. In 1870 he came to Lake Charles and was in business with W. B. Morris. He remained there for five years. In 1875 he entered partnership with A. J. Perkins and they conducted a sawmill and planing mill at West Lake. Mr. Miller was superintendent of the mill and an efficient business man.⁶⁵

Niblett's Bluff

An interesting place which added to the history of Calcasieu was Niblett's Bluff, now a small place on the Sabine River, six miles west of Vinton. For many years it was the most important point on the Old Spanish Trail. The trader in the very early days, in crossing the Sabine River, was inclined to pass to the south, but bad marshes obstructed the way. Highlands lay along the old river; Sabine Island, about ten miles long, and a large swamp lay in front. The way toward the north around the island was longer, so, intent on taking the shortest way, travelers passed on boats and rough barges down the old river to Big Bayou, across the island to the main Sabine River, and landed in what is now Orange County, Texas, at Green's Bluff.

Later, when the Texas cattle trade came, to avoid floating the herds over the river, the cattle were driven above the island to the north and crossed the Sabine at Salem's Ferry, about where the bluff now stands.⁶⁶

Prien

A pretty hamlet was on the rolling lands southeast of Prien Lake, and was used mostly for a summer resort. It derived its name from Cyprien Duhon, an early citizen, whose nickname was Prien.⁶⁷

Rose Bluff

Rose Bluff, formerly a village and shipping point, was on the right bank of the Calcasieu River, and a few miles north of Moss Lake. A. Pujo built a mill on the river. When a post

⁶⁵ Mayo files.

⁶⁶ *Lake Charles American Press*, November 15, 1932.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

office was established there, he gave the place the name of Rose Bluff, for his daughter, Rose. She is now Mrs. Oliver Moss, mother of Lucius L., Guy, Paul, and Pearl Moss.⁶⁸

Other Small Villages

In Calcasieu Parish we find many towns and settlements bearing the names of those who founded them or were very closely connected with them.

Gillis was a station ten miles north of Lake Charles and was so called for James Gillis, a Scotchman, who was a landowner there and who operated a sawmill.⁶⁹

Deesport was one of the lost towns of Calcasieu Parish. It was the site of a large mill and village on the south bank of the Calcasieu River, a short distance west of the north approach to the Old Spanish Trail bridge, near the present home of Miss Mathilda Gray. Quite a village sprang up about the mill, and land was platted for homes. Then came the bridge, and the Shell Beach Drive, and the place became a "deserted village". Today no trace of the town or mill remains. Its name commemorates Daniel C. Dees, the owner of the mill, and father of T. A. and Mabel Dees.⁷⁰

Jones' Bluff on the east side of the Calcasieu River was the head of the navigation on the Calcasieu and was sixty-eight miles from the Gulf. It was an important shipping point. Its name was from Benjamin M. Jones, who came there in a very early day from Mississippi and built a sawmill on the river.⁷¹

Mossville was a village five miles west of Lake Charles. Shortly after the Civil War a village was started there, called Choat's Prairie, for Mr. Choat, a local farmer. Later on the railway came and the town was named Mossville.⁷²

Lockport was a town on the west side of the Calcasieu River, directly west of Lake Charles, and one mile south of the Old Spanish Trail. Captain George Lock operated a sawmill there at a very early date, and gave it his name.⁷³

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Interview with A. M. Mayo.

Goosport was a local and very commonly used name for this section of the city of Lake Charles. It lay north of Opelousas Street. Daniel Goos, from Germany came here and acquired a large tract of land on the river just above the lake. Here he built his home on the highland near the riverbank, where the Long-Bell Mill afterwards was located. His farm, cut up into additions, was popularly called Goosport, and the name is not fanciful, for Goosport was a real port; wharves and docks and warehouses witnessed a heavy shipping business for a new country. The first steamboat on Lake Charles was built here.⁷⁴

Hortman's Ferry was one of the almost forgotten, but very important, historic spots in Calcasieu Parish. It was located about a mile northwest of Lake Charles, and about three miles northeast of West Lake, on the north side of the letter S bend in the river, nearly one mile east of where Bagdad now stands. It was the crossing point of the Old Spanish Trail frequented and used by the explorers and adventurers and traders between Florida and Mexico, long before American ownership and before the French hunters and trappers came. The land at the ferry was one of the old Spanish grants which had to be settled by a commission from Washington and was later confirmed to Reese Perkins, assignee of the original grantee. The building of the city of Lake Charles farther south and the diversion of travel caused its abandonment after the bridge to West Lake was built. Its name was from a ferryman who owned a large tract of land there, Adam Hortman.⁷⁵

Bagdad was a village that was once at the ferry west of Lake Charles. In the old days Reese Perkins operated a ferry there. This was a great crossing place for cattle drivers from Texas to New Orleans, and as many as 1,500 and 2,000 cattle crossed the ferry here in one day.⁷⁶

This story is told of the place. Mr. Perkins sold the ferry and the adjoining land to James H. Buchanan. He allowed a man by the name of Holt to lay out a town, and the two were to share in the profits. Mr. Holt, having laid out the town, called it Lisbon, sold the lots at any price he could obtain, put the money in his pocket, and left town, leaving Mr. Buchanan to make explanations. Even today people are known to come and ask to see

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Lake Charles American Press*, November 15, 1932.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

Lisbon, and say they have bought a lot there.⁷⁷ The town is no longer called Lisbon, but Bagdad. The village never developed; a ferry, a few houses, and a shingle mill are all there are to the place.

CHAPTER VIII

SOCIAL LIFE

Those of us who live in the present often think of the years in the past as being dull and uninteresting, with little to do for amusement. If we will only take time to examine old newspapers, or talk with someone who lived in those days, we will find an abundance of interesting material, good stories, and most of all, we will change our ideas on the life in the good old days. Of course, it is not logical to expect that people did the same things that we do today; but we must change with the times—just as many good times were had in early Calcasieu as we have today.

There were no society editors on the early newspapers. The articles were scattered throughout them. In the year 1869 the first article noted was an account of a logrolling made possible by the overflow of creeks and bayous down which the logs could be floated. The article read as follows: "There is some talk of having a log rolling in this vicinity."¹ Logrolling and chimney daubing sometimes were both combined. Young men put their handspikes under mighty logs, each striving to put the other's knuckles into the dirt, and occasionally stopping to allow two champions to wrestle, and then the dinner!—fresh pork, beef dumplings, chicken pie, potato cakes, sweet potpies sprinkled with allspice and cinnamon, and hot coffee made in a twenty-gallon wash pot. As a matter of course, a dance was to top off the affair. These dances were held by the light of fat pine knots, and the music furnished by fiddlers. The fact that these men had never played with one another mattered little, the all-important question was to get music, plenty of it, and a man with endurance. Dancing started sometimes before sunset and was certain to last until sunrise. Contra dances, cotillions, waltzes, and cross-the-corner reels swept steadily on to the music of "Turkey-in-the-Straw", "Cotton-Eyed Joe", "The Old Gray Horse Came Tearing through the Wilderness", "Dinah", "Get Along, Liza Jane". The

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹ *Echo* (Lake Charles), October 22, 1869.

prompter of the dance was some man. On him depended the swift movements of the dance as well as seeing that the fire did not get low. One can hear him now, "Swing your corners, now your partners, promenade around and put on another piece of pine!"²

Preaching days brought the whole community together, on foot, horseback, and by oxwagon; the latter was loaded with good things for the dinner on the ground. And the sermon—no higher criticism, no new-fangled theology—Heaven was glorious and Hell was hot; and many an appeal was made below those whispering pines that was worthy of being sent singing down the ages.³ After preaching day these people returned to their homes feeling much benefited.

The first wedding recorded was that of John Roe of Lake Charles and Ella Cooper of Bagdad, on December 11, 1868. The marriage ceremony was performed by the Reverend J. F. Shulock.⁴

The politics of the time were very important and many entertainments were given by the members of the parties. An example of one of these comes from an account published September 26, 1868. The article tells of a Democratic mass meeting and a barbecue which was to be held near the Baptist Church in Big Woods, Calcasieu Parish, on Saturday, October 10, 1868. A general invitation was extended to all, irrespective of color. The ladies were especially invited to attend. The affair was to be followed by the usual dance. Special space was to be provided for the Negroes.⁵

The abundance of lakes and rivers in the parish made it possible to have all kinds of water fetes. Records of 1874 show that one such was held in Lake Charles on May Day. All people having sailboats or skiffs were invited to participate. Following the water events, a soiree was held at the home of Mr. Ryan. No special arrangements were made for music, but as was usual in those days, anyone playing an instrument was invited to bring it and take part in the music.⁶

One would think from accounts that the fair folk in this parish were a little vague on their dance steps, because in 1877 a dancing school was organized by Professors McClelland and

² *Lake Charles American Press*, September 6, 1906. Article by S. O. Shaddock.

³ *Ibid.*, January 6, 1906.

⁴ *Echo* (Lake Charles), December 11, 1868.

⁵ *Ibid.*, September 26, 1868.

⁶ *Ibid.*, April 25, 1874.

LeBleu. The classes were held in Mr. O'Brien's hall and instruction was given in all waltzes, polkas, mazurkas, scottisches, Spanish dances, cotillions, quadrilles, and fancy dances. The classes met on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.⁷

The famous old Opera House was also very popular in Lake Charles at this time. It was owned by Mr. Ficke. Many enjoyable ice cream parties and receptions were held in this building. An interesting list of plays that were given in 1880 follows: "Rip Van Winkle", "East Lynn", "Only a Farmer's Daughter", "The Daughter of the Regiment", and "Macbeth".⁸

Perhaps the most prominent institution in Lake Charles was the Fire Department. It was considered quite an honor to belong and regular dues had to be met. The first volunteer fire department was organized in 1897, and the first fire ordinance passed March 3.⁹ It was very much of a social organization. On one occasion the company gave a grand ball at the Temperance Hall. Quite a committee made preparations for this affair. Some of the members were H. C. Gill, Adolph Meyer, O. T. Schindler, S. H. Clement, N. C. Fricke, and Joseph Daniel. Those who delighted in dancing had a rare opportunity to enjoy themselves at this ball. The purpose of the ball was to raise money, since there were so many frame buildings being built that the danger from fire was becoming great.¹⁰

Mardi Gras was celebrated in Calcasieu at an early date. In 1899 we find where Lake Charles has celebrated with Mardi Gras. The festivities were directed by L. C. Rex.¹¹

The churches gave pound parties very much like those today, but at this time the ladies' aid societies gave necktie parties. Before the party the young ladies would decide what dress they were going to wear, and then they would make a necktie of the same material. When they reached the party, all neckties were put in large boxes or baskets. The gentlemen at the party would buy the ties and the girl who wore a dress to match a tie would be the partner of the tie's owner for the evening.¹²

⁷ *Ibid.*, May 6, 1877.

⁸ *Ibid.*, April 10, 1880.

⁹ *Ibid.*, September 10, 1879.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, November 8, 1880.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, March 29, 1899.

¹² *Ibid.*, May 3, 1899.

The moonlight excursion on the steamer *Hazel* was highly enjoyed by 125 persons from Lake Charles, Lockport, and West Lake. The *Hazel* arrived at Lockport and the people were ushered to the scene of merrymaking. It was a pretty grove lighted with Japanese lanterns and fitted with tables and chairs that lured the thirsty on. The tables were soon filled with the gay and happy throng who enjoyed the cakes, ices, etc., dispensed among them by "sweet sixteens" in virgin white. In a spacious hall near by the dancers defied the intense heat and kept time to the music furnished by a string band till the musical whistle of the *Hazel* warned them at one o'clock that the hour of departure was at hand. This entertainment netted \$74 for the Episcopalians.¹³

Another attractive party was the grand pink lawn party featuring a strawberry and ice cream festival given May 1, 1889, at the home of Mrs. J. E. Loxley for the purpose of raising money to paint the Episcopal Church. The evening was beautiful and cool enough to be pleasant. At an early hour the magnificent mansion of Mrs. Loxley and the beautiful grounds surrounding it were lighted with Japanese lanterns, making it a most attractive place. The interior of the house was lavishly decorated with roses and pink ornaments, and the souvenir room looked for all the world as if the fairies had been there and decorated it. Miss Gussie Goodlett was the presiding priestess and disposer of things. There was music for the grown-ups in the parlor and games for the children outdoors. Old and young participated. Strawberry ice cream, cakes, and sugar plums were served. Between ten and eleven o'clock a fire alarm was sounded which dispersed the crowd enjoying refreshments.¹⁴

Among other church socials given were oyster suppers,¹⁵ balloon ascensions, band concerts,¹⁶ and barn dances.¹⁷ It would be tiresome to relate more.

One of the favorite occupations then was boating. A boat named *Borealis Rex* was owned by Captain Thomas R. Reynolds, proprietor of the Haskell House, and was used for delivering mail between Lake Charles and Cameron.¹⁸ The boat was also used on all holidays as a pleasure craft. Parties used this boat and the

¹³ *Lake Charles Commercial*, July 25, 1888.

¹⁴ *Lake Charles American*, May 8, 1889.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, December 5, 1889.

¹⁶ *Echo* (Lake Charles), May 2, 1891.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, May 22, 1891.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, June 17, 1881.

papers are full of notices announcing such trips. On Sunday, March 12, 1882, the boat caught on fire under the boiler and was completely burned. No insurance was carried so the boat was a total loss, and the source of much pleasure to the people was destroyed.¹⁹

The gentlemen seemed to have been tired of the ladies' company about this time, for there was an account of a stag party given in West Lake on June 10, 1882.²⁰ Perhaps there was another reason for this change in the social circles; possibly most of the town's belles may have been away on their summer vacations and the gentlemen had to console themselves as best they could.

In August, 1882, a skating club was organized. A. Mayo was president and M. M. Singleton secretary and treasurer.²¹

And now the parish settlers were given a thrill! A circus came to Lake Charles in October, 1883. The company included a two-headed girl, five clowns, and represented all nations.²² It was quite a contrast to the colossal shows we see today, but probably afforded as much pleasure to the children.

The fire company was still a very fashionable organization. Their eighth anniversary was celebrated April 2, 1886. From seven-thirty until eight-thirty in the morning a parade was given by the Hook and Ladder Company No. 1. Immediately afterwards the public was invited to go to Meyer's Wharf from where they would be taken to Hargrove's Bluff on the steamer and barges. All were invited to attend with well-filled baskets.²³

The christening of the new hose cart was held at the residence of W. J. Martin. The little lady who was made the sponsor was Grace Martin. Her name was given to the cart, and in return she was presented with a diamond ring. The program was followed by a plentiful repast where champagne flowed freely.²⁴

The first wedding that was really written up in a big way was that of Miss Lottie Mayo, who is the present librarian in Lake Charles, and Elly Dees. The ceremony took place on March 6, 1887, at the Methodist Church and was performed by the Reverend Joel T. Daves. Mrs. Dees is the daughter of Thad Mayo,

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, March 20, 1882.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, June 15, 1882.

²¹ *Ibid.*, August 18, 1882.

²² *Lake Charles American*, October 24, 1883.

²³ *Ibid.*, April 6, 1886.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

one of the most prominent citizens of the day. In front of the altar was arranged a beautiful arch of evergreens and roses. In the center of this beautiful creation hung the traditional wedding bell. This bell was not the usual imitation but an honest-to-goodness one that sweetly chimed forth as the bridal party marched down the aisle. The service was performed in the presence of a host of friends of the family.

Following the services the whole party adjourned to Fricke's Opera House where a huge reception was held. The party was a gay one with loads of refreshments, and the dancing continued until the early hours of the morning. Good wishes to this couple were extended from their hosts of friends.²⁵

Another wedding which took place that same year was that of Grant Mutersbaugh and Cora Marsh, daughter of Captain O. M. Marsh.²⁶

And then we find the wedding which created perhaps the most interest of any in the town. On December 9, 1887, a notice was published announcing that cards were out for the wedding of Augustus M. Mayo and Minnie Knapp, daughter of S. A. Knapp. The wedding was to take place at the South Methodist Church, Thursday evening, December 15, 1887. A few days later the personal column showed that many friends of the affianced couple were coming to Lake Charles to stay with friends and attend the wedding. When the night finally came around, it was cold and very rainy. Since there were no automobiles in those days, the people had to go in carriages. The ceremony was performed by the Reverend Joel T. Daves.²⁷

The account of the wedding was missing from the papers, but many interesting stories are told about it. It seems that cold as the weather was, Mrs. Mayo had carried a beautiful ivory and blue silk fan. When she went to step into her carriage, she was so excited that she dropped the lovely article into the mud and water from which her loving husband had to fish the badly drenched article. It is still in the possession of Mrs. Mayo, but has never been used.²⁸

An organization of great importance to the gentlemen of the town was the Rod and Gun Club. Prizes were given for the best

²⁵ *Lake Charles American*, March 10, 1887.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, November 15, 1887.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, December 9, 1887.

²⁸ Interview with A. M. Mayo, February, 1935.

shot. Meetings were held regularly to discuss the best guns, how to catch certain fish, and similar questions so important to the men.²⁹

For several years the social events differed very little, and it is the year 1910 before anything of particular interest is noted. Perhaps the first event which concerns people who are well known in this section of the country was the marriage of Poly LeBleu to Miss Nora DeLaune. The affair took place March 25, 1910.³⁰

It is interesting to note the progress that can be made in one community in twenty-five years. To us an automobile is considered an everyday necessity. To the people of 1910 an automobile was a much desired luxury. The leading makes of cars found in Calcasieu were Overlands and Buicks. Among the owners were Loree Briggs, Dr. J. H. Watkins, Clem Moss, H. G. Chalkley, and J. T. Henning.³¹

The fun was not without catastrophe, however; on August 10 the boat *Irene* exploded and burned, causing the death of one and several serious injuries. Little Miss Pauline Woodring was burned to death. J. A. Landry was seriously burned, and Louis Swann was burned about the hands while attempting to rescue Miss Pearl Moss.³²

An airplane meet was held in 1911. It was the first of its kind in this section of the country, and it was believed by the people that it would not be long before the airplane would become an important factor in transportation.

With conditions much changed from the time that we first began our narrative, and with the Imperial Parish of Calcasieu divided into four parts in 1912, we drop the threads of our review of the social happenings. The social life in Lake Charles was characteristic of the life in the entire parish.

CHAPTER IX

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

At a very early date Calcasieu was interested in public schools. The progress and success of the schools have been the results of a wise and progressive police jury, municipal authori-

²⁹ *Lake Charles American*, September 10, 1900.

³⁰ *Lake Charles American Press*, April 1, 1910.

³¹ *Ibid.*, April 8, 1910.

³² *Ibid.*, January 13, 1911.

ties, and an energetic school board.¹ The police jury appointed the following gentlemen administrators of public schools for Calcasieu Parish November 2, 1841: Christopher Hicks, Michel Pithou, Thomas Bilbo, James Buchanan, and William Foreman. Again in 1843 the police jury appointed Thomas Bilbo, Colonel Hicks, Michel Pithou, Isham Reeves, and William Berody.² In January, 1846 the term trustees of public schools was used, William Foreman and Henry Moss being appointed by the police jury.³ On June 1, 1846, we find the list of trustees enlarged, including William Foreman, Thomas Bilbo, Henry Moss, James Perkins, and Henry Bendy. The parish judge was to notify trustees of public schools to meet at Marion on June 22.⁴ It was resolved that the parish tax be sixty-five per cent of the state tax for 1845, and that \$200 of the above amount be laid aside for public schools.

In 1848 S. Kirby was appointed parish superintendent of public schools, and the parish was laid off into school districts as follows:

School District No. 1 to consist of Parish Ward No. 7.

School District No. 2 to consist of Parish Ward No. 3.

School District No. 3 to consist of Parish Ward No. 2.

School District No. 4 to consist of that part of Ward No 1 commencing from the mouth of Bayou Bleu, passing by Hilaire Bullard's old residence and thence to Andrew Langlois' present residence on Hickory Flat, thence running west to the present residence of Joseph Ryan on Darbonne.⁵

School District No. 5 to consist of the balance of Ward No. 1 which was not included in District 4.

School District No. 6 to consist of Parish Ward No. 6.

School District No. 7.

Appropriations of \$50 to each of the wards was granted by the police jury.⁶

The earliest annual report to the General Assembly of Louisiana, made by the state superintendent of education, in which there was a report of Calcasieu Parish, was in 1854. There were

¹ Calcasieu Police Jury Minutes, November 2, 1841, p. 33.

² *Ibid.*, 1843, p. 45.

³ *Ibid.*, January 6, 1846, p. 104.

⁴ *Ibid.*, June, 1846, p. 114.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1848, p. 19.

thirteen school districts with 784 pupils attending. The amount paid teachers was \$4,164.59. This money was received from the state apportionment.⁷ During the same year Charles H. Hardy, William H. Haskell, and Samuel B. Nolby were appointed to examine teachers in the following branches: Orthography (Webster), Reading (McGuffey series), Penmanship (Dolbear's), Geography (Olney's), Arithmetic (Dane's), English Grammar (Kirkham's).⁸

In 1857 Samuel B. Nolby and C. A. Hardy were appointed to examine teachers of pupils in public schools, the former to make examinations in English, the latter in French, and the parish treasurer was instructed not to pay the drafts of any teachers in the future unless they presented their certificates of qualification from the board; and to avoid confusion, the directors of different schools were instructed not to employ any applicant for a school unless he presented his certificate of qualification.⁹

In the report of 1858 pupils had increased from 784 to 917. The amount paid the teachers was less than it had been; they received \$2,036. The number of months taught was from three to five.¹⁰

Examining the reports of the state superintendent to the General Assembly of Louisiana, no report was found from Calcasieu Parish public schools during the Civil War, but the *Calcasieu Press*, 1860, mentions the Lake Charles Seminary with D. A. Bland as principal, stating the cost of lodging with lamp furnished was \$12.50 per month.¹¹ The reason for very little development in the schools is to be found in the poverty of the people, the devastation caused by the War, and the civic trouble resulting from the era of Reconstruction. However, several private schools were conducted in the year 1866. Mrs. Theodule Landry taught in a little one-room, unpainted building in Lake Charles. Jim Ryan taught until 1867 in a building at the corner of Ryan and North Court Street. Mrs. Dade and Mrs. Mary Kirby Howard, daughter of Samuel Kirby, also taught.¹²

⁷ *Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education to the General Assembly of Louisiana*, January, 1855, pp. 65-66.

⁸ *Police Jury Minutes of Calcasieu*, March, 1855, p. 114.

⁹ *Ibid.*, March, 1857, p. 13.

¹⁰ *Report of State Superintendent of Public Education*, 1858, pp. 13-18.

¹¹ *Calcasieu Press*, October, 1860.

¹² Miss Maude Reid's Scrap Book.

The next annual report to the state superintendent from Calcasieu was in 1871. The parish had grown to nine school districts; twenty-three teachers were employed, and there was a four-month term of school. The average salary for teachers was \$43.50 per month.¹³

Some of the names of the first teachers of Calcasieu on record in 1876 were: Miss Mary E. Rowe, W. B. Knight, Louis Donlange, Lise Landry, Mrs. T. E. Dade, A. Bennoist, W. M. Dunn, C. A. Ruscue, S. W. Pierce, John Kelly, James E. Bilbo.¹⁴ The report of 1877 was incomplete as compared with the 1876 report. The enrollment given was 128, the number of teachers employed, 5, and the average salary was \$25.45, with length of term 2.5 months. The subjects taught were: Webster's Speller, McGuffey's Reader, Alphabet and Primer, Penmanship, Arithmetic, Geography, Grammar, and History. This report of the treasurer was exceedingly interesting; it stated that the parish had done nothing toward raising school funds and had depended entirely on state apportionments which had not been sufficient to have a school term of adequate length.¹⁵

In December, 1879, W. H. Baldwin of Columbia, South Carolina, established a school known as the Sugartown Male and Female Academy, which ran ten months during the year for two years. This was the beginning of the southwest Louisiana school system. This school enrolled students from Rapides, Vernon, Lake Charles, Sulphur, and some places in Texas. A number of young men who were graduated from this school have made good, possibly more so than any other products of one-room schools in the state. Some of them are Dr. S. M. Lyons of Sulphur, who served one term as assessor of Calcasieu Parish and was representative of his parish at his death; B. H. Lyons of Leesville, who served one term in the state senate as a senator from Rapides; J. J. Hicks, who served two terms as Clerk of the Vernon Court; and Dr. D. S. Perkins of Sulphur, who served one or more terms in the state legislature.

A number of lady teachers were graduated from this school. Previous to this no woman ever taught school in this vicinity. Mrs. Mollie Iles of Sugartown was an assistant teacher at this school later on.¹⁶

¹³ *Report of State Superintendent of Public Education*, 1871, pp. 163-180.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, January, 1876, pp. 107-109.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1877, p. 24.

¹⁶ *Lake Charles American Press*, November 4, 1931. Article by Robert Jones.

In the early eighties Calcasieu was very badly in need of schools. In the *Lake Charles Commercial* we find there were five schools in the parish. These were taught by Reverend G. C. Hyde, Lewis J. Bourges, Mrs. M. A. McClellan, Mrs. J. B. Demere, Miss Julia H. Harrington.¹⁷ S. O. Shattuck said that teachers came around not even semioccasionally. Once in a great while a school-teacher made his appearance and created a mild sensation. If he succeeded in getting enough "signers" to the school agreement, a log house was constructed at the most convenient point, so that no pupil had to walk more than three miles, which in those days was considered just a bit down the road. Books of every sort and description were gathered together and a three-months' school would be started.¹⁸ Mr. Shattuck was a great force in the early school work of the parish, and he said that something had to be done about education for the children of Calcasieu. In a speech to the school board in 1882, he said there were 3,600 children in the parish to be educated; the department of education gave only \$3,000 to educate them. His plan was for the department of education to give \$3,000. The police jury was allowed to levy a tax not to exceed 10 mills. It could ask for a grant of 1 mill which would mean a revenue of \$1,500. Then a special tax of 4½ mills could be levied, thus raising the rest of the sum.¹⁹ However, no further mention of the plan is found.

Lake Charles was realizing that she was greatly in need of schools and we find mentioned that several of the residents were willing to subscribe as much as \$500 each for the erection of a graded school for boys, but nothing came of the idea.²⁰

In 1881 "John McNeese opened his common school in the Masonic Lodge."²¹ He is said to have done more for education than any other one man in Calcasieu. John McNeese came to the parish from North Carolina in 1873. For ten years he taught in the public schools of Calcasieu. He was secretary of the parish board in 1884. When the office of superintendent was created by the board, he was the first superintendent in 1888 and served until 1913.²² In the minutes of the school board for September 8, 1882, we find the following: "On motion by C. D. Welsh, duly

¹⁷ *Lake Charles Commercial*, October 22, 1881.

¹⁸ *Lake Charles American*, June 2, 1906.

¹⁹ *Lake Charles Commercial*, June 20, 1882.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, August 20, 1881.

²¹ *Ibid.*, October 1, 1881.

²² Interview with Mrs. Emma McNeese Squires.

seconded, John McNeese was nominated for the office of parish superintendent. On motion by Mr. John H. Poe, the nomination was closed. Mr. McNeese was unanimously elected."²³ No record is found that Mr. McNeese made as superintendent until July 6, 1889, and the following report was made by the new superintendent: "There are six schools in the parish that open for six months in the year, three that open for ten months. There are six schools that have teachers' salaries varying from \$25 to \$30 per month. Since November, 1888, there has been spent \$6,740, an average of 188 months of school at an average cost of \$35 per month."²⁴

At this same school board meeting a committee of five citizens was appointed to solicit funds for the erection of a school building in Lake Charles. The funds when collected were to be paid over to a building committee. The president of the board was authorized to borrow \$1,500 to pay for labor and material for the school board, the lot and building to be mortgaged for that amount as security. The school board did not have the authority to levy taxes directly for the support of the public schools, but the police jury, which is the governing body of the parish, was permitted to make donations to the school funds. In the newspaper we see that the police jury donated \$3,000 to the parish public school funds.²⁵

On January 4, 1890, Superintendent McNeese rendered to the board his first annual report, as follows:²⁶

Number of schools taught	24
Number of schools in operation	13
Organized by me in operation	7
Number of schools organized in district having no previous benefit of public schools	8
Number of teachers under contract	24
Male teachers	13
Female teachers	11
Primary grades	7
Grammar grades	17

²³ Minutes of the School Board of Calcasieu Parish, September 8, 1888.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, July 6, 1889.

²⁵ *Lake Charles Weekly American*, April 24, 1889.

²⁶ Minutes of the School Board of Calcasieu Parish, January 4, 1890.

New, enrolled this term.....	15
Teachers enrolled previously	45
Pupils enrolled in 24 schools.....	840
Making for each school	35
Number of teachers and length of term:	
12 schools taught 3 months, total.....	36 months
2 schools taught 4 months, total.....	8 "
6 schools taught 5 months, total.....	30 "
2 schools taught 6 months, total.....	12 "
2 schools taught 10 months, total.....	20 "
Making an average of nearly 4½ months of each school.	
Number of schools in bad condition.....	4
Number of schools having room for writing.....	6
Number having little or no accommodation.....	14
Number of schools taught.....	63
Number of months taught.....	155
Males enrolled	1,064
Females enrolled	887
Total enrollment	1,951
Average attendance	24
Average salary	\$38.65
Amount spent for each schoolhouse.....	\$95.00
Number of log schoolhouses.....	30
Number of frame schoolhouses.....	46
Number built this year	7

In 1890 it was resolved that because of the Sugartown Male and Female School and its many advantages as an educational center, it be instituted as a school of high grade. M. E. Shaddock was the first principal and S. J. Iles was his assistant.²⁷

Our second high school of the parish was in Lake Charles. The proceedings of the school board in 1888 show that purchase of

²⁷ Record of School Board Proceedings of Calcasieu Parish, 1890, pp. 74-78.

the city block upon which Central School now stands was made from J. B. Watkins. The building was known as Central High School of Lake Charles. It was a frame building, two stories high, forty feet wide and eighty feet long. The building was completed October 23, 1889. The following is a statement of all amounts disbursed from the beginning of the enterprise until it was completed:

Complete cost of enterprise.....	\$5,596.19
Paid for lot	800.00
Paid for grading lot.....	15.00
Paid for plans and specifications of architect....	50.00
Paid contractor from Third Ward funds.....	1,329.00
Paid contractor loan from J. B. Watkins.....	1,491.95
Paid contractor from subscription funds.....	526.00
Paid Bradley-Ramsay Company	1,384.19
To Balance	5,489.19
Obligations to be met	\$1,500.00
Interest on same, 1 year	180.00
Due Bradley-Ramsay Company	1,284.19
Amount available for town council.....	500.00

Professor O. S. Dolby was elected principal and Miss Crossman and Miss Jenkins elected as second assistants; before the year closed five teachers were employed.²⁸

The following table will show principals and salaries:²⁹

1890-91	Principal, O. S. Dolby; salary, \$75 per month.
	First assistant, \$30
	Second assistant, \$40
1892-94	Principal, C. H. Bucher; salary, \$90
	First assistant, \$60
	Second assistant, \$40
1894-95	Principal, J. E. Kenny; salary, \$110
	First assistant, \$75
	Second assistant, \$70

²⁸ Minutes of the Calcasieu Parish School Board, April 5, 1890.

²⁹ *Lake Charles Daily Press*, Special Edition, 1895.

1895-96 Principal, J. E. Kenny; salary, \$130

1897-98 Principal, C. G. Shaffer; salary, \$100-\$125

1898-99 Principal, C. G. Shaffer; salary, \$150

1900-01 Principal, J. N. Yeager; salary, \$100

The Lake Charles College deserves to be mentioned in our school history. It is situated in the southeastern part of the city.³⁰ The main building is fifty-five feet by eighty-five feet, and there are three stories, sixteen, fourteen, and twelve feet high. The building contains fourteen rooms. It is located in the center of a large campus. In the southwestern corner of the campus a cottage was located for the purpose of boarding students.³¹

The building was loaned to Dr. Hubbel by J. B. Watkins for the purpose of organizing a college. The college, with Dr. Hubbel as its president, lived through a varied and eventful career of nine years and closed its doors in 1899. The college opened again for educational purposes October 1, 1890, with a faculty of five. There were three departments—academic, preparatory, and collegiate. Reverend Henry L. Hubbel, D.D., the president, was a native of Connecticut, and for several years he was pastor of the Congregationalist Church at Amherst, Mass. Reverend A. R. Jones, a graduate of Amherst College, was a professor in the college; Mr. C. W. Little, a graduate of Fox Lake Seminary, Iowa, was professor of music. The enrollment during the first month was thirty-nine.³²

Professor J. T. Barrett's school, known as the Acadia College, was destroyed by fire, and permission was given to him to reopen his school in what is known as the Old College building. Its reopening might be characterized as the last gasp before it finally expired from the effects of the disastrous fire in 1902. This may be recorded as the death of the second college within these classic walls.³³

In 1903 the school board purchased the old college with its sixteen-acre campus, and moved the high school grades there.³⁴

³⁰ Records of Calcasieu Parish School Board, 1890, pp. 94-100.

³¹ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 147.

³² *Ibid.*, 148.

³³ Interview with Professor J. T. Barrett.

³⁴ Interview with Helen Wentz.

In 1890 the parish adopted the state board of education system of grading the teachers. All teachers making an average of 85 on examination were to receive a first-grade certificate; a grade of 75 to 84, a second-grade certificate; and a grade of 50 to 69, a third-grade certificate.

The following reports of Superintendent McNeese to the school board will speak for themselves:³⁵

1890

Number of schools in operation.....	57
Number of teachers.....	57
Male teachers.....	41
Female teachers.....	26
Average cost of 57 schools.....	\$120.50
Average cost per month.....	36.50
Enrollment of white.....	2,138

Four townships held elections and voted the sixteenth section for school purposes. Two high schools were established.

In 1891 we find Mr. McNeese saying that the Calcasieu police jury raised their donation from \$3,000 to \$7,500.³⁶

1891³⁷

Number of schools taught.....	40
Average attendance of schools.....	1,610
Enrollment in schools.....	2,075
Number of months taught.....	150
Average monthly salary of teachers.....	\$46.20
Number of teachers.....	62

Amount of funds raised:

Poll taxes.....	3,000
Parish donation.....	7,500
Lake Charles (corporation).....	1,500

³⁵ Minutes of School Board of Calcasieu Parish, January 5, 1890.

³⁶ Interview with Mrs. Emma McNeese Squires.

³⁷ Minutes of the School Board of Calcasieu Parish, May 31, 1891.

Jennings (corporation).....	700
Welsh (corporation).....	500
State apportionment.....	2,500
Amount of 16th Section funds spent.....	302

1892³⁸

Number of schools in parish—white.....	103
Number of schools in parish—colored.....	11
Total	114
Pupils enrolled—white males.....	2,167
Pupils enrolled—white females.....	1,917
Pupils enrolled—colored males.....	263
Pupils enrolled—colored females.....	258
Teachers employed—white males.....	68
Teachers employed—white females.....	43

At the close of the year 1892 Mr. McNeese completed his first four-year term as superintendent and was reelected for an additional four-year term.³⁹

1893⁴⁰

Number of schools in parish—white	103
Number of schools in parish—colored	17
White and colored enrollment	5,273
Teachers—white	103
Teachers—colored	17

A fight for better schools was taken up by the newspapers. The *Lake Charles Daily American* commented on the crowded building and asked that the police jury do something to relieve the crowded conditions.⁴¹

The same year we find Dequincy erecting a new building of frame construction, twenty-four feet by forty feet.⁴² Gillis community had petitioned for a school, provided the people would

³⁸ *Ibid.*, January 5, 1893.

³⁹ Interview with Mrs. Emma McNeese Squires.

⁴⁰ Minutes of the School Board of Calcasieu Parish, 1893.

⁴¹ *Lake Charles Daily American*, February 8, 1899.

⁴² *Ibid.*, March 13, 1899.

donate the land for a site.⁴³ The most important action of the board meeting in April, 1899, was a declaration in favor of a central graded school for each ward of the parish, where all children of the ward who desired a more extended education than that afforded by the district schools might be taught. These central schools were to be graded and improved in every way and many ambitious children would be afforded an education which otherwise they would miss. The idea of a central ward school for each ward or township was to be tried in Calcasieu Parish. The police jury was to make an appropriation for an extra teaching force and a longer term.⁴⁴

In 1903 a committee composed of Superintendent McNeese, D. B. Gorham, and Leon Chavanne called upon J. B. Watkins, who was a prominent capitalist and promoter of the city. When Mr. Watkins was informed that they wished to buy the old college building for the use of a high school, he set a very nominal price of \$7,000 on it and thirteen acres of ground on which it was situated. The committee immediately accepted the offer and made arrangements to loan the Lake Charles district \$7,000 from the Sixteenth Section funds of the parish school monies for the purchase. These funds represented the sale price of the sixteenth section of each township, granted by the federal government to the state for school purposes. The principal could not be spent but must be invested and the interest used. It was a part of this principal which was loaned to Lake Charles district and was to be paid back with interest at a later date.⁴⁵

In the fall of 1903 for the only time in Louisiana history, the parish school superintendent was required to stand as a candidate for election to his office by the popular vote of the people.⁴⁶ The campaign closed in January, 1904. Three men were candidates for the office. Results were as follows:⁴⁷

John McNeese	1,275
John H. Poe	1,812
M. E. Shaddock	701

It will be seen by the results that no one of the candidates had a majority of votes, so under the Louisiana system of double

⁴³ *Ibid.*, April 14, 1899.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Lake Charles American*, April 23, 1903.

⁴⁶ *Lake Charles Daily American*, October 28, 1903.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, January 21, 1904.

primaries, the two candidates having the highest number of votes ran again in the second primary. Mr. McNeese was elected. the following year the power of appointing the parish superintendent was restored to the parish school board. Mr. McNeese never ran for office again.

The schools were facing financial difficulties and when the parish school board met in regular session January 6, 1905, Dr. D. S. Perkins, president of the board, issued a statement to the press in which he remarked that he understood the local advisory board of Lake Charles' schools would ask the parish board for a free hand in handling the city schools. They wished a free hand in the matter of financing the school and in the control of the teachers. Dr. Perkins further stated that he understood that the local board had made arrangements with the banks to operate the schools until a special tax could be voted.⁴⁸

At the request of the city board of school directors, City Attorney Overton drafted a bill providing for complete, separate control of the school affairs of the city, to be vested in the city board. The bill provided for a board of five members to be elected at large from the city. All members were required to read and write the English language, and to be qualified voters of the city. The board was to have power to elect a superintendent and to fix his salary, and the superintendent was to have the same general qualifications as a parish superintendent.⁴⁹

In Mr. McNeese's annual report for 1907, he stated that Calcasieu's progress as to schools had not kept pace with industrial development; and the money invested for school supplies had been insignificant compared with the amount invested to develop resources generally. It was calculated that the amount of revenue from the state and poll tax was not enough to give more than one month's school in the entire parish. The \$25,000 from the police jury had stood without increase for some years, seven or eight, though the number of school children had increased from 8,000 to 15,000; and had it not been for a compensating influence of the special tax, then amounting to \$40,000, the character of the school work would not have grown in strength, because of the shortening of the term and less valuable time of the teacher.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, January 6, 1905.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* April 14, 1906.

The enrollment for the year was 7,935 white, and 1,260 colored. Nine hundred were attending private schools.⁵⁰

The first thing to be considered in a school system is the question of finances. Calcasieu ranks high in this respect, which is proof of the progressive ideas of the people. The total receipts for the fiscal year July 1, 1909 to June 30, 1910, were \$259,602.69. The disbursements for the same period were \$79,426.60, leaving a balance on hand of \$80,176.03. Of the receipts \$86,300.18 came from special taxes voted by the people, and of the disbursements \$110,881.46 was spent for salaries of white teachers. There were employed in the white schools thirty-nine men and 178 women teachers.

It had been the policy of the superintendent to operate the schools on a cash basis and the balance of \$80,176.03 left in hand July 1, 1910, was for the purpose of opening the schools for the session beginning September 5, 1910. By operating on a cash basis the school system got the interest on daily deposits in the banks, which was quite an item to be considered.

Special taxes were voted in all wards of the parish except Nos. 5 and 10, and elections were to be held in these at an early date. There were twenty special districts in which taxes had been voted, and about half the revenues received in the parish for schools was derived from special taxes voted by the people.

In 1911 there were seven state-approved high schools, as follows: Jennings, Welsh, Lake Charles, De Ridder, Merryville, Oakdale, and Vinton. The average length of the school session for the high school was nine months and for the elementary schools eight months.⁵¹

Consolidation of schools had taken place as fast as conditions and funds permitted. In 1911 there were twenty-four wagonettes which proved very satisfactory.

Corn clubs and home economics clubs were organized in the parish.⁵² These facts proved that Calcasieu had made wonderful improvements in an educational way.

⁵⁰ Minutes of the School Board of Calcasieu Parish, October 17, 1907.

⁵¹ *Lake Charles American Press*, Special Edition, 1911.

⁵² *Ibid.*

Libraries

One of the important factors in the educational life of the parish was the public library. On November 4, 1901, the North American Land and Timber Company took the initiative, through A. V. Eastman, to found a public library in Lake Charles. Mr. Carnegie provided \$10,000 for the erection of a free library building, and the directors of the North American Land and Lumber Company provided the present site. The library ordinance was passed December 3, 1901.

In June, 1903, the library board held its first regular meeting. A. V. Eastman was elected president of the board and Miss Verona Keener was to serve as librarian. Miss Keener was requested by the board to go to New Orleans and spend some time as assistant librarian under Mr. Beer, librarian of the Fisk and Howard libraries, thus familiarizing herself with all the details of her position as librarian. On August 4, 1903, Miss Keener left for the city, spending ten days in the Howard Memorial Library, three months in the Fisk Library, and one month in the Tilton Memorial Library of Tulane.

The Carnegie Library was opened in Lake Charles on Monday, March 7, 1904, with 760 volumes catalogued. Miss Keener was librarian until December, 1909, when she resigned. Miss Laura Dees was then elected and held the position a year, and in December, 1910, sent in her resignation. Miss Ruby Gray was then elected.

The first annual meeting of the board of directors of the Carnegie Library was held January 6, 1904, in Mr. Eastman's office. Mr. Eastman served as its president until his death in April, 1905.

At the next regular monthly meeting, Mr. Ramsey was elected president, which position he held until April, 1906, at which time he tendered his resignation as he was moving from town. In February, 1907, L. Kaufman was elected president.

In 1911 the board of directors were L. Kaufman, president; Robert Leake, secretary and treasurer; L. H. Moss, S. T. Woodring, George Locke, Dr. T. H. Watkins, Mayor C. B. Richard, and A. P. Pujo.

In 1911 there were 3,708 volumes catalogued in the library. In addition to this number were the reference-room volumes which consisted mainly of cyclopedias and government books. The membership in 1904 was 840 patrons; in 1911 the enrollment was 1,804, showing that the people of Calcasieu were eager for improvement.⁵³

Newspapers

The earliest paper in Calcasieu Parish was the *Calcasieu Press*, published at Opelousas, St. Landry Parish.⁵⁴ It was established by Judge B. A. Martel and John A. Spence in June, 1855.⁵⁵ It expired during the Civil War. It was published every Saturday morning and was printed partly in English and partly in French. It was very small, only four pages.⁵⁶

The *Calcasieu Gazette*, published in Lake Charles, appeared in 1858. The *Commercial and Pictorial Directory*, New Orleans, 1858-1859, lists it as being published in English and French.⁵⁷ It was under the management of William Meyer and brother. The office was located at the corner of Ryan and Pujo streets on what is now the site of the Charleston Hotel.⁵⁸

The *Lake Charles Echo* made its initial appearance on February 16, 1868. It was published weekly—on Saturdays. It was a Democratic paper and did not appear very regularly. It was established by Judge J. D. Reed and Louis Leveque. After changing ownership several times, it was bought by Captain W. J. Bryan in 1871. The French section was omitted. In March, 1890, he sold it to a stock company and the next year it was edited by W. F. Schwing.⁵⁹ Almost all of the front page of this paper was devoted to advertising. The ads read from top to bottom of a column, with letters placed perpendicularly, and never extending over one column in width.⁶⁰

⁵³ Interview with A. M. Mayo.

⁵⁴ Tinker, Edward Larocque, *Bibliography of French Newspapers and Periodicals of Louisiana*, 108.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Interview with A. M. Mayo.

⁵⁷ Tinker, *op. cit.*, 99.

⁵⁸ Interview with A. M. Mayo.

⁵⁹ Tinker, *op. cit.*, 95.

⁶⁰ *Lake Charles American Press*, office files.

The *Commercial* and the *Patriot* were also organs of political factions. The *Commercial* was founded by McCormack and Company in 1881, and was a weekly, as were the *Echo* and the *Patriot*, the latter established by H. J. Winfree in the late 'eighties.⁶¹

"A Journal Devoted to Southwest Louisiana, the Home Circle and General News" was the slogan of the *Weekly American*, founded in 1885 by J. B. Watkins. The Watkins Co., landowners and owners of the Watkins' Railroad, devoted the columns to boosting the country in their own interests. The paper was issued every Wednesday, and its editor was Z. S. Everett. The weekly was four columns in width and averaged sixteen pages per issue; it was fifteen and one-half inches long and ten and three-fourths inches in width.

Poetry, jokes, fillers, and serial fiction appeared on the front page, but advertising was confined to the inside. Drawn illustrations had titles guaranteed to stir the imagination. A young folks' department was maintained by "Uncle Al", precursor of 1931 editor of "Junior Lake Charles". Children wrote long letters to "Dear Uncle".

Editorials in the *American* sometimes covered as much as one and three-fourths pages of space. The page also carried letters from readers. Front-page news consisted principally of excerpts from larger papers. There were no headlines slanting from left to right and no italic type was used.⁶²

In August, 1893, the *Weekly Press* was established by J. F. Reed from Peoria, Illinois. Another Illinois newspaperman, Guy Beatty, who had been a competitor of Reed in Peoria, came south in February, 1894, and was invited to Lake Charles by Reed to "see the town." As a result of this visit the two men decided to join in the publication of the *Press*, Reed continuing editorial control and Beatty handling the business end. The property was owned equally by the partners. New equipment was added, including a job printing department, and on February 4, 1895, the first issue of the *Daily Press* was printed.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

After about a year, Beatty sold his interest in the *Press*, and Reed formed a stock company; but in the fall of 1896 Reed died of pneumonia and the property was later sold to William Sterling, who in turn was succeeded by W. H. Steidley. Following Steidley, the *Press* was owned and edited by Robert W. Woolley for a time; he was formerly a member of the staff of the *New York World*. Eventually the *Press* property came into the sole control of C. A. McCoy.

J. H. Neal, a nephew of J. B. Watkins, founder of the *Weekly American*, started the *Daily American* in 1897. Watkins, however, retained ownership of the paper.

Both the *American* and the *Press* were live and interesting daily papers, but proved too heavy a drain on the business community, and at no time were profitable to their owners.

Early in 1897, after an absence of about a year in Houston, Texas, Beatty returned to edit the *National Republican*, the name of which was changed to the *Lake Charles Tribune*. The Watkins Co. decided to sell the *American* in 1898. In the fall of that year Beatty arranged the consolidation of his own *Tribune* with the *Commercial* (managed by Michael and Edward McCormack) and with the *American*. The merger was completed on December 8. Beatty was joined by William E. Krebs, a newspaper man from Monticello, Illinois, and the business was organized on a fifty-fifty basis. The two papers issued were titled *Daily American* and *Weekly Commercial Tribune*. Publication continued from the *Daily American* plant, on the site of the present Lake Charles Association of Commerce Building, Broad and Hodges streets. After a few months the plant moved to Ryan Street, next door to the First National Bank.

The *Echo* office was burned about 1900, and the owner did not re-enter business, so that the city had two papers, the *American* and the *Press*, as rivals, each printing a daily and a weekly edition.

In 1904 Beatty sold his interests in the *American* to Krebs who continued as publisher and owner for the next five years. Beatty and A. M. Jones bought the *American* and the *Press* in

1909, formed a stock company, and took in Krebs as a third member. In the fall of 1909 the organization of the *American Press* was completed, and on January 1, 1910, the papers were merged under the title, *Lake Charles American Press*.⁶³

Reaching fifty-two communities of southwest Louisiana, the *American Press* has become one of the most progressive papers in the state. As early as 1912, it was recognized for leadership. In that year it was chosen by the Oregon School of Journalism as one of the fifty-two best country newspapers in the United States.⁶⁴

CHAPTER X

RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENTS

Baptists were the pioneers of religion in Calcasieu Parish. They established the first church on Calcasieu River. It was called Antioch Church in 1830, and some years afterwards it was removed to Big Woods about ten miles from the original site.

Next came the Methodists; the first church was called Ryan's Chapel and was located about eight miles from Lake Charles on the west fork of Calcasieu River. After Lake Charles was laid out other denominations organized churches.¹

In Calcasieu the preaching day brought the whole community together, by foot, horse, or oxwagon, and the latter was loaded with good things for the dinner on the ground.

Methodists

The first Methodist Episcopal Church, South, located at the corner of Broad and Bilbo streets, had the distinction of being the first Protestant church built in Lake Charles. The church appeared in the minutes of the Louisiana Conference of 1847 as a part of "Calcasieu circuit", with Reverend Robert Gill, pastor. Lake Charles circuits² appeared in the minutes for the first time in 1870.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹ Perrin, *op. cit.*, 146.

² Interview with A. M. Mayo.

The present church site was purchased in 1873 and the building of the church began that year. In 1876 the Sunday school was formally organized and began its career of effective service. Otis M. Marsh was the first superintendent. Prior to this time the members met in a union Sunday school at the Masonic Lodge. In 1880 the Lake Charles church was made a station with Reverend Silas H. Cooper as pastor. In 1900 the church was remodeled, and on September 30, 1900, it was dedicated by Bishop Charles B. Galloway. It was under the efficient pastorate of R. W. Tucker that the remodeling took place and the parsonage was built.³ All through the years the church has made steady progress and has been a vital force in the religious life of Lake Charles and the parish.

Catholics

To write the history of Calcasieu and omit the history of the Catholic Church would be like writing an American history and leaving out the Revolutionary War. The Great Roman Catholic Church, through its missionaries, the Jesuits and others, made it possible for civilization, in its march of progress, to make headway. Hardships are not considered by the consecrated men of this church; they have blazed the way for the settlement of many sections of the country, and have played an important part in the settlement of Calcasieu. It was a band of Catholics who were expelled by the British in Canada, and who made their way through trackless forests to this section of the country. When Calcasieu was formed, the Catholic Church was organized in the early 'fifties. The first property bought by the Catholics was on May 18, 1857, when the front half of the Ryan Street property was purchased for \$375 from Siruis M. Pithou. On this property the first mission church in Lake Charles was established. The building then erected sufficed for the needs of the parish until after the Civil War; additional property was purchased from Reverend Father Raymond on February 11, 1867. On March 30, 1869, another piece of land was bought from William Hutchins.

From 1854 to 1890 the spiritual needs of the parish, then a part of Opelousas, received attention from the Opelousas priests.

³ *Lake Charles American Press*, Southwest Louisiana Country Building Edition, 1910.

In 1866 and 1867 Father Simon ministered to the spiritual wants of the people, receiving help at times between 1870 and 1879 from Father Curé. From 1879 to 1886 Father Kelly was in charge of the work in the parish, with Lake Charles as his headquarters. It was Father Kelly who brought the Catholic sisters to Lake Charles to teach in the Catholic schools, and who erected the first church. Father Kelly was succeeded by Father Fallon, who remained in charge of the work from 1886 to 1891. Father A. Droosaert's parish was limited to that territory consisting of the eastern part of Calcasieu, that section east of the Watkins Railroad and south of Bayou Blue. Father Vandinen was placed in charge of Jennings, but later he was moved to Lake Charles, where he remained from 1892 to 1902.

In 1892 Father Cramers was sent to Lake Charles and has been the priest in charge since that time. The limits of the parish now are the same as they were in 1892. Besides the church in Lake Charles, there are chapels in Oakdale, Oberlin, Iowa, Sulphur, and two in course of construction, one at Vinton and the other at Kinder. The fire of 1910 destroyed the following buildings: the Presbytery, built by Father Vencence; the church built by Father Kelly; the convent which consisted of the sisters' home and the boarding department of the school; the girls' school, a brick building; the boys' school; and the Catholic Knights' Hall and the Parochial Hall.⁴

Baptists

The first Baptist church in Lake Charles was organized January 25, 1880, in the old courthouse. Six men and eleven women, Elder Scofield, and Deacon Nathan Smart of Bagdad presided. It was decided to take steps to erect a church building at once.⁵

Reverend A. P. Scofield was at that time a missionary in Lake Charles. Membership was as follows: S. D. Read, G. M. Gossett, W. D. Jenkins, S. J. Norwood, N. P. Smart, Reverend A. P. Scofield, E. A. Woodrome; Mrs. Martha Gill, Mrs. Clara Jenkins, Mrs. Delia Bryan, Mrs. Catherine Norwood, Mrs. J.

⁴ *Ibid.*, June 28, 1911.

⁵ *Echo* (Lake Charles), January 31, 1880.

McClelland, Mrs. A. Collins, and Sarah Reed. During that year there were added to the church six other members. The building of a house in which to worship was considered no small undertaking, but firm in their faith and with an indomitable Christian spirit, and believing in the ultimate success of their prayerful efforts, they set about the undertaking. It became necessary for them to excuse their pastor from duties in order that he might get out and travel in the interest of the building fund. By the end of the year they had met with sufficient encouragement to let the contract for the building which stood for nearly a quarter-century at the corner of Ryan and Iris streets.

During the year 1881, Reverend W. H. Robert acted as missionary to the church, but he was with the church only a short time, during which there were three members received into the church.

The next regular pastor of the church was Reverend A. J. Jerry in 1883. He served until September of that year, when the church was greatly saddened by his death.

In 1884 L. C. Kellis became pastor, in 1885 Reverend D. F. Heard, and in 1886 Reverend A. P. Scofield was again called to the pastorate.

In September, 1887, Reverend Scofield resigned. In 1888 Reverend R. W. Merrill was elected, but declined. In April G. W. Rogers was called and remained three years. Brother Rogers was succeeded by T. G. Algred in 1892 and remained for six years. Reverend M. M. Virgin came for a year, and in 1898 M. E. Weaver became pastor, remaining until 1904. Then came H. H. Shell.

On April 24, 1910, a new \$30,000 building, located at the corner of Pujo and Hodges streets, was dedicated.⁶

Presbyterians

Mrs. J. E. LaBesse tells the story of the women Presbyterians in Calcasieu. Mrs. LaBesse moved to Lake Charles in 1881. After living there for two years without hearing a sermon by a Presbyterian minister, she wrote to F. W. Lewis, who was at that time pastor of the Presbyterian churches at Lafayette and Opelousas.

⁶ *Lake Charles American Press*, Southwest Louisiana Country Building Edition, 1910.

He came to Lake Charles and they looked up and called on all the Presbyterians they could find, and afterwards Mr. Lewis came and preached to them every fifth Sunday.⁷

On April 19, 1888, Reverend Lewis and Elder L. A. Black of Opelousas organized a church of the Presbyterian faith and order in the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Louisiana.⁸ It was composed of sixteen charter members. Mrs. LaBesse is the only one still living.⁹

As early as 1885 collections were being made for the erection of a building. Mrs. LaBesse says that she collected the first dollar to buy a lot on which to build. This lot was on Hodges Street, and was purchased from Captain Bryan. It is said that another party wanted to obtain the lot, so the Presbyterians were given only one day in which to raise the \$150 for it. Judge Kearney made the first donation.¹⁰ On March 16, 1890, the new house of worship was erected on the corner of Hodges and Mill streets. Reverend C. W. Lyman took charge of the church in October, and was installed as pastor.¹¹ The following list of pastors has served the church: D. L. H. Hughes, 1899; J. Y. Allison, 1900-1910. In 1900 the property at the corner of Broad and Ford streets was purchased and the church moved there.¹²

Episcopalians

The history of the Episcopal Church dates from 1885, when the Reverend E. W. Hunter, the bishop missionary, gathered the members of this church in Lake Charles and organized a mission under the name of the Good Shepherd. The first church was located on Hodges Street between Pujo and Kirby streets. In 1894 the present site on Kirkman and North Division streets was purchased.

In 1896 the mission was organized into an incorporated parish and began its organic life as such under the rectorship of the Reverend Joseph H. Spearing. The clergymen officiating as

⁷ Letter from Mrs. J. E. LaBesse.

⁸ *Lake Charles American Press*, June 28, 1911.

⁹ Letter from Mrs. J. E. LaBesse.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Lake Charles American Press*, June 28, 1911.

ministers of the organization were the following:¹³ George Davis Adams, C. D. Mock, J. E. Hammond, J. Marborne, Joseph Spear-
ing, O. H. Borbarg, Albert H. Edrosk, John Huntley, J. W. Carter
Johnson, Caleb B. K. Weed.

Lutherans

The history of the St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church is one of great interest. It begins with the year 1887, when a number of German immigrants from the Island of Folhr, in the North Sea, landed in Lake Charles through the influence of Captain Goos. The necessity of a German Lutheran missionary for this section of the south was seen at once, and Reverend P. Roeman was called as a missionary. In the spring of 1888 the St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized and Reverend S. Hoernicke installed as pastor. Soon the congregation purchased several lots, which at that time were "piney woods", and they began plans for a house of worship. On December 2, 1888, their house was dedicated. In September of the following year a parochial school was opened and a building erected for this purpose.

The services had been held in German, but in the year 1895, English services were introduced. We find this congregation changing pastors often, which has worked a hardship on the people. The following list of pastors served:¹⁴

Reverend Hoernicke, 1888-1892; J. Kossmann, 1892-1895; Kuffle, 1895-1902.

Methodist Episcopal (North)

The Methodist Episcopal Church (North) had its beginning in 1890, when Bishop Vincent of Chatauqua fame presided at the Louisiana conference at Shreveport, and Cyrus Armstrong King, ex-presiding elder and who at that time was serving at large a church in the Southwest Kansas Conference, was appointed to Lake Charles.

Work preparatory to the organization had been done by Reverend W. H. Cline, presiding elder of the Lake Charles dis-

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, November 4, 1916.

trict, and Dr. S. A. Knapp. These men, coming from other states and with boundless faith in Lake Charles and in the parish and its great possibilities, had a wide vision of the spiritual as well as the temporal needs of the community. They arrived on the eve of great advancement, and organized the Methodist Episcopal Church, March 2, 1890. Reverend Cyrus King preached his first sermon to his people at 3 o'clock, Sunday afternoon, March 2, 1890. At the close of the services the church was organized with fourteen members. Two weeks later the Presbyterians moved into their new church and the Methodists occupied the old Masonic Hall in their stead and held services there for nearly eight years.¹⁵

Minor Sects

A Christian Science Society was organized in 1907, but in 1912 it was disbanded.¹⁶ On March 20, 1909, a Seventh Day Adventist Church was organized, but most of the members moved away, and it was not reorganized until many years later.¹⁷

A social service agency was the Salvation Army Post, established in Lake Charles in 1903.¹⁸

From the above statements it is not difficult to see that Calcasieu was the home of many churches and God-loving people. The different churches have also served in a social and charitable way for the people of the parish.

Baptist Orphanage

The institution known as the Louisiana State Baptist Orphanage is not only the pride of Calcasieu Parish, but of a host of Baptists in the state.

In October, 1903, twenty-five orphans were brought by the Louisiana Baptists to Lake Charles and located in an orphanage, with Mrs. Kate Hawkins as matron. Prior to this the orphanage had made an humble beginning in Keachie with ten children in a borrowed building.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Interview with A. M. Mayo.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Letter from M. E. Lantz.

The Louisiana Baptist State Convention appointed a Board of Trustees to direct the affairs of this orphanage. The president of the Board was W. H. Managan, Sr., who served faithfully and gave generously of his time and money to build up and maintain the institution, the cost of which was approximately \$800 a month, which was raised by subscription all over the state, from either individuals or churches. The people of Lake Charles did their share in supporting the orphanage, and most of the money needed for the maintenance of this school was spent in Lake Charles.¹⁹

St. Patrick's Sanitarium

There is another institution in Calcasieu where no one who needs attention is ever turned from its doors—this is the St. Patrick's Sanitarium. The Catholics of Lake Charles began agitating the question of building a sanitarium in the city, so that when the poor needed attention, it could be given them, and at the same time furnish a suitable place for the care of patients by the physicians who prefer treating the sick and performing their operations in a hospital. The result of the agitation was the establishment of a sanitarium on March 17, 1907, when the doors of the institution were opened to the public. It was a fitting celebration of the natal day of the patron saint of the downtrodden people of Erin's Isle that the sanitarium that bears his name should be opened on the day of his birth.

A board of Sisters of Charity were sent to take charge of the sanitarium. History is too full of good works of the band of devoted women to tell what they have done since coming to Lake Charles and assuming charge of the hospital. The Sisters attend to all the nursing themselves.

The hospital building is situated in a live oak grove on the car line to Shell Beach and is an imposing brick building of two stories. It is arranged so that all rooms are outside ones and face a veranda which surrounds the entire building. Each room is supplied with modern facilities.

While no charges are made for treatment, those who are able are expected to pay. The people of Lake Charles and Calcasieu are doing their part, and everyone points with pride to the sanitarium as an attraction to the parish.²⁰

¹⁹ *Lake Charles American Press*, June 28, 1911.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

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THE AFTERMATH OF RECONSTRUCTION IN LOUISIANA*

By MARGUERITE T. LEACH

CHAPTER I

LOUISIANA IN THE PERIOD OF RECONSTRUCTION

The Radicals left the Democrats a heritage of knotty problems to solve. Taxes were high and the State was deeply in debt. Public officials were receiving enormous salaries and the returning board was still in existence. The people were clamoring for reforms. Especially did they desire the abolition of the Radical Constitution of 1868. Moreover, white supremacy was not yet firmly established in Louisiana, and the spectre of a return of carpetbag and Negro control continually alarmed the Conservatives. In some parishes Radicals and blacks still held all of the offices.

The first attempt at reconstruction was made at the close of 1862 by Governor George F. Shepley. He ordered an election on December 3 for two Congressmen, and the successful candidates, B. F. Flanders and Michael Hahn, were seated in the national legislature.¹

Early in 1863 a movement to reorganize the state government was begun by the Free State General Committee,² but little progress was made. Then in accordance with Lincoln's "Ten Per Cent Plan" announced by proclamation December 8, 1863, an election of state officers was ordered for February 22, 1864.³ Michael Hahn, the administration candidate, was elected by a large majority. The Confederates also held an election for state officers and chose General H. W. Allen as governor.⁴

By order of General N. P. Banks an election was held March 28, 1864, for delegates to a constitutional convention. It

* Master's thesis in History, Louisiana State University, 1933.

¹ Ella Lonn, *Reconstruction in Louisiana after 1863* (New York, 1918), 1-2.

² Alcée Fortier, *A History of Louisiana*, 4 vols. (New York, 1904), IV, 38.

³ Lonn, *op. cit.*, 2.

⁴ Fortier, *op. cit.*, IV 39.

met April 6, and completed a constitution July 23. Slavery was abolished but suffrage was restricted to white males. At an election held September 5, the Constitution was adopted by a vote of 4,664 to 789.⁵

The new Legislature provided for in the Constitution met October 3, elected two Senators and adopted the Thirteenth Amendment. Although the government set up under the new Constitution was recognized by the President, the Representatives to Congress were not seated⁶ and the electoral vote of the state was not counted.⁷ Soon after Andrew Johnson succeeded Lincoln, he recognized the reconstructed government.⁸

J. Madison Wells, who had succeeded Governor Hahn, issued a proclamation for an election of State officers on November 6, 1865. Wells was elected Governor and Albert Voorhies Lieutenant-Governor. The Legislature was almost entirely Democratic. The Radicals claimed that Henry C. Warmoth had been elected delegate to Congress for the "Territory of Louisiana."⁹

The Democratic Platform of 1865 contained a resolution which condemned the Constitution of 1864 as the creation of fraud, violence, and corruption, and recommended another that would express the will of the people.¹⁰ The new Legislature assembled in special session on November 23, 1865. Immediately the validity of the Constitution was questioned, and an investigating committee was appointed. The majority report considered it the creation of fraud and violence and recommended that the question be submitted to the people for their decision. The minority declared it valid. After electing Randell Hunt and Henry Boyce as U. S. Senators in the place of Michael Hahn and R. King Cutler who had been rejected, the Legislature adjourned without any further action regarding the Constitution.¹¹

In the spring of 1866 some thirty or more members of the Constitutional Convention of 1864 became so exasperated because ex-rebels were acquiring state offices that they planned

⁵ *Ibid.*, IV, 51-53.

⁶ Lonn, *op. cit.*, 3.

⁷ Walter Lynwood Fleming, *The Sequel of Appomattox* (New Haven, 1922), 120.

⁸ John W. Burgess, *Reconstruction and the Constitution* (New York, 1907), 38.

⁹ Fortier, *op. cit.*, IV, 72-73.

¹⁰ The Louisiana Democratic Platform, 1865, in Walter L. Fleming, *Documentary History of Reconstruction*, 2 vols. (Cleveland, 1906-1907), I, 229.

¹¹ Fortier, *op. cit.*, IV, 73.

to regain control by enfranchising the Negroes.¹² They issued a call for the old Convention to meet in New Orleans, June 30, 1866.¹³ In spite of active opposition, it reassembled in New Orleans on the designated day.¹⁴ On their way to the meeting place a procession of about one hundred Negroes became involved in a fight with some white citizens and police. In the ensuing combat nearly two hundred persons, mostly Negroes, were killed or injured.¹⁵ This episode, together with the rejection of the Fourteenth Amendment and the passage of "Black Codes" throughout the South, caused Congress to conclude that the Negroes were not safe in the hands of their former masters, and led to the adoption of a more radical plan of reconstruction. This was embodied in the acts of March 2, 23, and July 19, 1867, which united Louisiana and Texas in the Fifth Military District. General P. H. Sheridan was placed in command.¹⁶ He irritated the people of Louisiana by replacing officers in whom the people had confidence with "Imported Yankees."¹⁷ He was removed August 17, 1867, and the command was assumed by General W. S. Hancock.¹⁸ The new administration was mild and liberal, but the necessary removal of certain officials was not sustained by Grant.¹⁹ Hancock was superseded by General Rousseau.

In September, a constitutional convention of ninety-eight members was elected, consisting by previous agreement, of whites and blacks in equal numbers. All but two members were Republicans.²⁰ A constitution was framed which gave the Negroes the same civil, political, and public rights and privileges as the whites.²¹ It forbade separate schools²² and disenfranchised all who had "violated the civilized rules of warfare" and all who had advocated treason against the United States in the press or pulpit, or had voted for secession.²³ This document was quietly ratified by

¹² John Rose Ficklen, *History of Reconstruction in Louisiana (Through 1868)* (Baltimore, 1910), 155-156.

¹³ Lonn, *op. cit.*, 4.

¹⁴ Fortier, *op. cit.*, IV, 81-85.

¹⁵ Burgess, *op. cit.*, 97.

¹⁶ Lonn, *op. cit.*, 5.

¹⁷ Report of Ethan Allen to President Johnson, April 9, 1867, in Fleming, *Documentary History of Reconstruction*, I, 443.

¹⁸ Samuel S. Cox, *Three Decades of Federal Legislation* (Providence, 1888), 547.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 549.

²⁰ Lonn, *op. cit.*, 5-6. Ficklen, *op. cit.*, 159, says only fifty-one members were elected to fill vacancies in the old Convention.

²¹ Extracts from the Louisiana Constitution of 1868, in Fleming, *Documentary History of Reconstruction*, I, 454.

²² *Ibid.*, II, 189-190; Fleming, *Sequel of Appomattox*, 217. The whites refused to attend the mixed schools.

²³ Burgess, *op. cit.*, 150.

a vote of 51,737 to 39,076.²⁴ At the same time H. C. Warmoth was chosen Governor over J. G. Taliaferro by a vote of 64,941 to 38,046. Oscar Dunn, a Negro house painter, was elected Lieutenant-Governor.²⁵

The new Legislature met in New Orleans on June 29. The Republicans, having a majority in both houses, were able to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment. Two days later General R. C. Buchanan announced that the provisions of the Reconstruction Acts had ceased to operate in Louisiana. The Legislature then elected two Senators, William Pitt Kellogg and John S. Harris. They took their seats in the Senate, July 18, 1868.²⁶

In spite of the fact that troops were stationed throughout the state,²⁷ Louisiana chose Seymour and Blair electors in the fall.²⁸ This was the result of the activities of the Knights of the White Camelia and the Ku Klux Klan. These organizations played upon the fears and superstitions of the Negroes, but when milder methods failed they resorted to outrages. They were determined to regain control of affairs in the State, peaceably or forcibly.²⁹

The period from 1868 to 1876 "was one in which the party in opposition consisting of most of the white inhabitants, pursued a policy of intimidation, even to the extent of assassination; while the party in power, consisting chiefly of negroes and white carpet-baggers, resorted to election frauds and to unblushing misappropriation of public funds." The value of property declined, the state debt increased to enormous proportions, and the payment of taxes fell more than \$2,000,000 in arrears.³⁰ The average annual expenditure of the state was about \$6,000,000 when hitherto \$600,000 had been ample to defray all expenses.³¹ Governor Warmoth, who had served four years at an annual salary of \$8,000, retired with a personal fortune estimated at \$500,000 to \$1,000,000.³²

In 1871 there was a split in the Republican Party.³³ Governor Warmoth's Republican enemies, the Custom-House faction and the United States officials in the state, were fairly panting to

²⁴ Fortier, *op. cit.*, IV, 107; Ficklen, *op. cit.*, 201.

²⁵ Ficklen, *op. cit.*, 201-202.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 203-204; Fortier, *op. cit.*, IV, 109-110.

²⁷ Lonn, *op. cit.*, 6.

²⁸ Burgess, *op. cit.*, 212.

²⁹ Fortier, *op. cit.*, IV, 111-113.

³⁰ Paul Leland Haworth, *The Hayes-Tilden Election* (Indianapolis, 1906), 85-86.

³¹ Burgess, *op. cit.*, 263.

³² *House Report*, No. 92, 42 Cong., 2 Sess., 24, in Fleming, *Documentary History of Reconstruction*, II, 39.

³³ Lonn, *op. cit.*, 96.

get at him. Realizing that his rule was nearing an end, he went over to the Democratic side. Since he controlled election machinery, his returning board declared John McEnery elected governor in 1872.³⁴ The Republicans claimed that Kellogg was elected and were able to install him with the aid of Federal troops and District Judge Durell's famous "midnight order."³⁵ The electoral votes were not counted.³⁶

Groaning under the yoke of corruption from which the ballot box afforded no relief, the people were prompted to violence. The Colfax riot resulted in Grant Parish when the judge and sheriff commissioned by Governor Kellogg attempted to take office. Fifty-nine Negroes and two white men were killed. The next year six Republican officeholders were murdered in Coushatta.³⁷

On September 14, 1874, the White League, a quasi-secret armed organization of Conservatives, rose against the Kellogg government. After a battle in the streets of New Orleans, Kellogg and his supporters were forced to take refuge in the Custom-House. He appealed to President Grant who intervened and used Federal troops to restore him.³⁸

November 2, 1874, an election was held for treasurer and members of the Legislature. The Democrats claimed that they had elected their candidate for treasurer, Moncure, and a majority in the Legislature. But the Wells Returning Board announced that the Republican candidate for treasurer, Dubuclet, was elected by a majority of 958 votes. It also declared that 53 Republicans and 53 Conservatives were elected to the Legislature but rendered no decision as to five seats.³⁹

When the Legislature met on January 4, the Democrats gained control of the House and seated the five contesting Democrats. All Republicans withdrew with the exception of five who were held by the Conservatives to make a quorum. That afternoon General P. R. de Trobriand appeared with soldiers and ejected the five Democrats and released the five Republicans. Thereupon the Democrats withdrew, and the Republicans effected a crude organization and proceeded to do business.⁴⁰

³⁴ Burgess, *op. cit.*, 269-271.

³⁵ Haworth, *op. cit.*, 86.

³⁶ James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850 to the Final Restoration of Home Rule at the South*, 7 vols. (New York, 1928), VII, 61.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, VII, 176-178.

³⁸ Haworth, *op. cit.*, 86-87.

³⁹ Lonn, *op. cit.*, 289; Rhodes, *op. cit.*, VII, 178. Fortier, *op. cit.*, IV, 164, says 54 Republicans and 52 Conservatives were elected.

⁴⁰ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, VII, 181-183.

General Sheridan, who had been sent by Grant to ascertain the true condition of affairs, sent a telegram to the President, January 5, stating that the terrorism then existing in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas could be entirely removed if the ring-leaders of the White League were arrested. He said if the President would issue a proclamation declaring them "banditti" they could be tried and sentenced by a military commission. A cry of indignation arose in the North and the South.⁴¹

On January 14, a special Congressional Committee which had witnessed the convening of the Louisiana House reported that the people wanted only peace and prosperity.⁴²

A Congressional Committee, composed of Representatives Hoar, Wheeler, Frye, and Marshall, reached New Orleans on January 22. They reported that intimidation had prevented a free election, but condemned the report of the Returning Board. The "Wheeler Compromise" gave the Conservatives a majority in the House by seating twelve Democrats excluded by the returning board; the lower branch then passed a resolution not to disturb the Kellogg government. The Senate remained Republican.⁴³

When the Legislature met on January 3, 1876, the House tried to abolish the Returning Board but the Senate defeated the measure. In February and March attempts were made to impeach Kellogg for acts committed since the "Wheeler Compromise", but the proceedings were blocked by the Republican Senate.⁴⁴

On June 27 the Republicans met in New Orleans and after some stormy sessions nominated S. B. Packard for governor and renominated C. C. Antoine for lieutenant-governor. The Democrats held their convention in Baton Rouge on July 24 and selected General F. T. Nicholls and Louis A. Wiltz as their candidates.⁴⁵ Both sides believed that the climax of the reconstruction struggle was involved in this campaign.⁴⁶ The Democrats planned a peaceable canvass in most sections of the State. They gave barbecues and made promises of equality that "outstripped the Republicans." In a few selected parishes, where they had everything to gain and nothing to lose, they pursued a policy of bulldozing. From previous experiences the Negroes had learned that

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, VII, 183-185.

⁴² Report of the Committee, in Fortier, *op. cit.*, IV, 170-173.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, IV, 177-179; Rhodes, *op. cit.*, VII, 190-191.

⁴⁴ Fortier, *op. cit.*, IV, 179-180.

⁴⁵ Haworth, *op. cit.*, 87.

⁴⁶ Lonn, *op. cit.*, 418.

when the whites entered upon a campaign of intimidation it was better to yield gracefully. They became the best of Democrats. A few stubborn ones were whipped or otherwise mistreated. The success of the Democratic policy was so great that the Republicans made merely nominal contests and devoted their time to collecting evidence of bulldozing.⁴⁷

The Republicans did not lose hope of carrying the election. In spite of Conservative clamor for representation, Governor Kellogg appointed Republican registrars almost exclusively.⁴⁸ They registered a maximum of Negroes and a minimum of whites.⁴⁹ The other weapon was the Republican Returning Board, the sole Democratic member having resigned. This board could count and declare the votes and also throw out the returns from voting precincts at which they thought there had been fraud, violence or intimidation, actual or threatened.⁵⁰

The election was held on November 7. At first the Republicans were inclined to believe they had obtained a majority. After returns had been received from outlying parishes it was found that the highest Tilden elector had received about 84,000 votes and the lowest about 83,000, while the highest Hayes elector had received only 76,000 votes and the lowest about 74,000.⁵¹ The Democratic papers exulted boldly and claimed the state for Tilden.

By November 9 it was apparent that the result was in doubt and national interest was focused on Louisiana.⁵² Among the prominent visitors to watch the proceedings of the Returning Board were John Sherman, James A. Garfield, Stanley Matthews, General Lew Wallace, Republicans, and John M. Palmer, William R. Morrison, Samuel J. Randell, Lyman Trumbull, and Henry Watterson, Democrats.⁵³

The Returning Board was composed of J. Madison Wells, "a political trickster and dishonest man,"⁵⁴ Thomas C. Anderson, a corrupt legislator, Louis M. Kenner, a colored saloon keeper, and Gadane Cassanave, an ignorant colored undertaker. The characters of the four men were not such as would inspire much

⁴⁷ Haworth, *op. cit.*, 89-91.

⁴⁸ Lonn, *op. cit.*, 426-427.

⁴⁹ Haworth, *op. cit.*, 93.

⁵⁰ John W. Burgess, *The Administration of President Hayes* (New York, 1916), 39-40.

⁵¹ Haworth, *op. cit.*, 93.

⁵² Lonn, *op. cit.*, 438.

⁵³ Fortier, *op. cit.*, IV, 181.

⁵⁴ Sherman's characterization of Wells, in Rhodes, *op. cit.*, VII, 295.

confidence in them or their decisions.⁵⁵ In spite of Democratic protests the vacancy in the Board caused by the resignation of Oscar Arroyo was left unfilled.⁵⁶

The Board managed to throw out enough votes to convert a Democratic majority of 7,639 into a Republican one of 3,457.⁵⁷ The result was not announced until December 6, the day the electoral college met and cast the eight votes of Louisiana for Hayes and Wheeler. On the same day the Democratic electors met and cast their votes for Tilden and Hendricks.⁵⁸

T. C. Anderson delivered the certificates to the Vice-President who called his attention to the improper indorsement of the envelope and allowed him to rectify it. He began to have doubts concerning the regularity of the contents. After a conference with prominent Republican leaders in New Orleans new ones were signed on December 29 and antedated to December 6. Two missing members' signatures were forged.⁵⁹

On January 1, Governor Kellogg barricaded the State House and admitted to the Legislature only members holding certificates from the Returning Board. C. C. Antoine presided over the Senate. Michael Hahn was elected Speaker of the House. The Democrats organized in Saint Patrick's Hall. Louis A. Wiltz presided over the Senate and Louis Bush was elected Speaker of the House.⁶⁰

On January 8, Packard was inaugurated at the Capitol and Nicholls at Saint Patrick's Hall. The next day a large force of armed White Leaguers gained possession of the police station and court rooms and installed Democratic appointees as judges of the Supreme Court. They captured the arsenal, blockaded the State House and would have overthrown the Packard government entirely had it not been for the interference of Federal troops.⁶¹ On January 10, the Republican Legislature met and elected William Pitt Kellogg to the United States Senate.⁶²

March 1, 1877, Packard appealed to President Grant for the recognition of his government. The President refused and

⁵⁵ Haworth, *op. cit.*, 98.

⁵⁶ Lonn, *op. cit.*, 448.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 460.

⁵⁸ Haworth, *op. cit.*, 114-115.

⁵⁹ Lonn, *op. cit.*, 464.

⁶⁰ Fortier, *op. cit.*, IV, 183-184.

⁶¹ Haworth, *op. cit.*, 294-295.

⁶² Lonn, *op. cit.*, 489.

further stated that public opinion would no longer support the maintenance of state government in Louisiana by the use of Federal troops.⁶³ By this time no government but that of Nicholls was recognized outside of the square of ground on which the State House stood.⁶⁴

Meanwhile the Electoral Commission had voted on February 16 to give the electoral votes of Louisiana to Hayes by a vote of eight to seven.⁶⁵ The Vice-President announced Hayes elected by a vote of 185 to 184. Three days later, March 5, he was formally inaugurated.⁶⁶

On March 28, President Hayes appointed a commission to go to Louisiana to ascertain what the hindrances were to a peaceful conduct of the state government without the interference of Federal authority.⁶⁷ The Commission arrived in New Orleans on April 5. They advised the withdrawal of troops from the support of the Packard government, and the President issued the order which was executed on April 24. Thus the final step in reconstructing Louisiana was taken.⁶⁸

Order and peace was quickly restored everywhere. The impoverished and plundered state could now take hope and make a new effort to recover some degree of prosperity and some measure of domestic contentment. But the Democrats had "as their dominant passion, an undying hatred of the Republican party as the author of their woes, and as their dominant policy, the stern and unbending resolve to stand together as one man against any movement which had even the slightest tendency towards a restoration of the hated conditions from which they had escaped."⁶⁹

CHAPTER II

AN UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT AT CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION

The State Legislature which convened in New Orleans on January 1, 1877, determined to destroy the instruments which the Radicals had used so efficiently in perpetrating the fraud of

⁶³ Fortier, *op. cit.*, IV, 188.

⁶⁴ Lonn, *op. cit.*, 492.

⁶⁵ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, VII, 339.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, VII, 242-243.

⁶⁷ Haworth, *op. cit.*, 295.

⁶⁸ Burgess, *Administration of President Hayes*, 86-87.

⁶⁹ Burgess, *Reconstruction and the Constitution*, 296.

1876. Acts were passed destroying the Returning Board¹ and minutely prescribing the method of holding elections and canvassing the returns. The commissioners of election were to keep numbered lists of persons voting at the polling place, and to count the ballots at the place where they were received, in the presence of anyone who wished to witness the tabulation. The sheriff of the parish was to mail one copy of the returns to the secretary of state and two to the parish clerk of court. The clerk was to keep one copy and mail the other to the secretary of state who was to compile and promulgate the returns. It was thought that the system would prevent fraud. However, it left many loopholes through which corrupt politicians could accomplish their ends.²

The Legislature adjourned without taking any real steps in the direction of reform. The people were not satisfied. They wanted to destroy all vestiges of radical control. The sentiment was ably expressed by the *Shreveport Times*: "This miserable abortion in the shape of the state constitution under which we live is the offspring of Radical scalawag and carpetbag dominion. If it was exceptionally good, still every line of it would stink of its paternity. But it is not only not exceptionally good, but it is outrageously bad. Every vestige of it must be wiped out so that we may commence anew."³ The *Opelousas Courier* declared that a constitutional convention was desired chiefly to bring about economy and retrenchment in the administration. It pointed out that state and municipal government was entirely too expensive and that the old system with its exorbitant salaries, its numerous offices, sinecures and perquisites, should pass away with the times that were able to support such luxuries.⁴

While the majority of the people in the state favored the calling of a constitutional convention, many opposed such a step on the ground that the time was not propitious for such drastic action. The *Rapides Democrat* argued that the question of substituting an entirely new one for the old was then "ill-advised and likely to produce more real, substantial and tangible harm in one year than would result from the old constitution in the ten years to come."⁵ The *Opelousas Courier* declared invalid the objections that the proposed step would arouse suspicion that the status of

¹ *Louisiana Acts*, 1877, p. 5. It is interesting to note that the first act passed by the Legislature abolished the Returning Board.

² *Ibid.*, 1877 Extra Session, 89-98.

³ *Shreveport Times*, quoted in *Opelousas Courier*, September 29, 1877.

⁴ *Opelousas Courier*, September 1, 1877.

⁵ *Rapides Democrat*, quoted in *Opelousas Journal*, October 20, 1877.

the colored race would be changed and that it would result in a withdrawal of sympathy and support of Northern friends and of the National Administration⁶ and that the only argument against it worthy of consideration was its "expensiveness." It warned the people against being "penny wise and pound foolish" and quoted figures to prove its assertion that the money saved in one year under a new constitution would more than pay the cost of such a convention.⁷

In discussing the next meeting of the Legislature, a "Travel-ler" suggested that it should consider whether the Constitution should be amended by legislative enactment or replaced by a convention. Should the latter course be adopted it was better, he argued, that the convention should be postponed a year or two because it was of utmost importance that the colored voters who had been attracted to the Democratic Party should not be driven away by apprehension of the ultimate purposes of those who clamored for a convention.⁸

When the Legislature met on January 7, 1878, it was impossible to ignore popular clamor for a change, or to delay action any longer. On the next day Edward D. White introduced the following resolutions which were adopted:

Be it resolved by the Senate of Louisiana,⁹ the House of Representatives¹⁰ concurring therein: That a joint committee to be composed of nine from the Senate and thirteen from the House, be, by their respective presiding officers, appointed, to mature and report such amendments to the Constitution of the State as may be necessary, and that said committee report within twenty days, if not sooner practical.¹¹

The committee was appointed and included: from the Senate, Edward D. White, chairman, F. P. Stubbs, F. C. Zacharie, C. B. Wheeler, A. J. Dumont, T. B. Stamps, C. J. Boatner, W. A. Robertson, and F. S. Goode; from the House, T. B. Lyons, R. J. Walker, J. B. McGehee, John Young, H. M. Washburne, D. A. Breard, Jr., B. F. Jonas, and Albert Voorhies.¹²

⁶ *Opelousas Courier*, September 1, 1877.

⁷ *Ibid.*, September 8, 1877.

⁸ "Traveller" in Letter to Editor, in *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, December 8, 1877.

⁹ *Louisiana Senate Journal*, 1878, p. 6.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹² *Ibid.*, 89.

The committee reported eighteen amendments which were adopted with minor changes by the Senate.¹³ The House approved the first eleven and another limiting the power of the General Assembly to levy taxes not to exceed one per cent per annum. The Senate refused to concur in the House's action.¹⁴

In order to present some amendments which would be acceptable to both houses a committee of conference was appointed, consisting of Senators E. D. White, Henry L. Garland, Pierre Landry and Representatives H. C. Warmoth, G. L. Gaskins, D. A. Breard, Jr., and T. B. Lyons.¹⁵ After much bickering and discussion the two houses finally agreed on twenty-one amendments which were to be submitted to the people at the fall election.¹⁶

The amendments lowered the salaries of the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, members of the Legislature, and justices of the Supreme Court. They provided that no officer whose salary was fixed could accept any fees or perquisites of office. The pocket veto was abolished by an amendment which stated that a bill presented to the Governor would become a law if not returned within five days when the Legislature was in session, or given to the secretary of state within thirty days when it was not in session. Taxation for all purposes was limited to one per cent per annum. Parish courts were abolished and provision was made for the removal of the capital to Baton Rouge.¹⁷

The amendments met with opposition from the beginning. The *Opelousas Courier* denounced them in scathing terms and declared that they were the "result of a compromise between three influences, Democratic senators, Republican senators, and office-holders."¹⁸ The *Baton Rouge Advocate* asserted that they were but a modification of some of the objectionable features of the old instrument.¹⁹ The *Sugar Bowl* said that the Legislature had proved to be "a complete abortion", and declared that instead of enacting measures of reform, it had "actually played into the hands of the lottery and other rings while seeking to appease the wrath of the people by submitting to their vote a lot of amendments which did

¹³ *Ibid.*, 101-106.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 148.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 148-152.

¹⁶ *Louisiana Acts*, 1878, pp. 119-125, 246; *Appleton's Annual Cyclopaedia*, 1878, p. 498.

¹⁷ *New Orleans Democart*, November 5, 1878.

¹⁸ *Opelousas Courier*, February 16, 1878.

¹⁹ *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, February 15, 1878.

not touch the vital points or bring the reforms so imperatively demanded."²⁰ The *Bossier Banner* lamented that the State was not to have a convention and pointed out that only a new constitution and complete Democratic control would insure a long period of peace and prosperity.²¹

It was soon seen that the amendments were doomed to failure. The people wanted a new constitution and they would not accept any compromises. The press urged that disapproval be expressed by voting against them. The *Courier* asked, "Why go through the form of voting for them when if they are ratified by the people they will prove unavailing and will not dispense with a constitutional convention?"²² The *Democrat* asked, "What do they amount to?" It said:

Let us see what evils they leave untouched. They place no restraint on the powers of corporations; they do not destroy a single one of the dangerous monopolies whose power is to be dreaded; they do not touch the excessive patronage of the Executive department; in the place of a thoroughly inefficient judiciary, they supply a still more imbecile and worthless one; and, finally, they suggest no relief for the excessive burdens which the municipal debt of New Orleans imposes upon the people and the property of this metropolis.²³

The approaching election, the first to be held under the Nicholls regime, was thought to be an important one. In addition to adopting or rejecting the amendments, the voters were to elect a State Treasurer, members of the State Legislature, members of the national House of Representatives, and parish officers. For the first time since the election of 1860, the people were to have "a full, free and fair opportunity to give expression to their opinions and convictions at the ballot box, undisturbed by war's rude alarms and unvexed by political roguery of Radical supervisors and Radical Returning Boards."²⁴ The Democrats felt that this was their chance to regain control of the political affairs of the state. It was also of great importance that a Democratic delegation be sent to Congress, for the choice of a President in 1880 might be thrown into the House.²⁵

²⁰ *Sugar Bowl*, quoted in *Opelousas Courier*, April 20, 1878.

²¹ *Bossier Banner*, quoted in *Opelousas Courier*, April 20, 1878.

²² *Opelousas Courier*, November 2, 1878.

²³ *New Orleans Democrat*, October 17, 1878.

²⁴ *Opelousas Courier*, March 23, 1878.

²⁵ *New Orleans Democrat*, October 4, 1878; October 29, November 4, 1880.

The current belief was that the old parties were disintegrating and that the election would show a realignment of the various factions.²⁶ It was thought that the withdrawal of troops from Louisiana by President Hayes had disrupted and demoralized the Republican Party.²⁷ It was asserted that the Party had a very feeble foundation to build on.²⁸

Although the papers expressed most sanguine hopes of a Democratic victory and declared the Republican Party too dead to rise again, under the surface prospects were not so encouraging. The rank and file of the Negroes still gave allegiance to the Republican Party. In thirty of the fifty-seven Louisiana parishes the number of registered Negro voters exceeded that of the whites. In totals, they were almost evenly matched, for 77,341 whites and 78,123 blacks were registered.²⁹ If all the qualified Negroes voted, the Republicans could easily elect the state and national officers and control many of the parishes. Thus white supremacy was threatened and it devolved upon the conservatives either to gain the support of the Negroes or to keep them from voting.

The Democratic campaign officially opened with the meeting of the State Central Committee in New Orleans, May 1, 1878, in pursuance of a call from Chairman T. W. Patton. The Committee issued a call for a state convention to be held in Baton Rouge the first Monday in August. It adjourned without mentioning the amendments. The next day there appeared in the *Democrat* an open letter, signed "Brutus," which said:

"There is one thing the Central Committee had just as well recognize fully, viz: That the people of Louisiana demand a constitutional convention, and all the political choking and swindling that may be resorted to will never turn their minds away from the subject. The late Legislature adjourned leaving a legacy of discord and turmoil, viz: some twenty amendments to the Constitution to be voted on. On principle this is one of the grossest outrages ever perpetrated; practically it is one of the stupidest blunders ever committed. . . . The people of Louisiana have no constitution of their own formation and adoption. For years they have been living under one so violative of human rights and so repulsive to them that they have always denounced it

²⁶ *Opelousas Courier*, March 23, 1878.

²⁷ *St. Landry Democrat*, January 26, 1878.

²⁸ *New Orleans Democrat*, May 8, 1877.

²⁹ *Report of the Secretary of State*, 1902 (Baton Rouge, 1902), 546-547.

without stint, and their great objective point in the prolonged and terrible struggle through which they have passed has been its annihilation.³⁰

The Republican State Central Committee met in New Orleans on June 12, in answer to a call from Chairman A. J. Dumont. The Democrats tried in every way they could to find out what was happening, but reporters were excluded and the proceedings of the meeting kept secret. They could only surmise that this was the beginning of the Republican campaign.³¹ On August 15, the Committee held a second meeting to decide whether it would be expedient to call a state convention. After discussing it pro and con, the committee decided to call one to meet in New Orleans on September 16.³²

In the meantime a group of disgruntled elements had drawn together and formed a new party known as the National Party. The Democrats were sorely puzzled as to the nature of the new organization. They didn't know whether it was radicalism in disguise, an unholy alliance between the soreheads of the Democratic Party, old Radical chiefs and Knownothingism, or what not.³³ They were anxious to discover the exact nature of the new party, but due to the secretiveness of the members they could find out nothing.

The State Democratic Convention assembled at Baton Rouge on August 5. Permanent organization was effected with Andrew Herron as chairman.

It was reported that four members from the tenth ward of the Parish of Orleans, E. Redington, H. H. Tilton, Thomas Milan, and William Mulligan had attempted to sell their votes. An investigating committee found them guilty and recommended their expulsion. Their report was adopted by the Convention.

Nominations were then declared open for a candidate for State Treasurer. John C. Moncure of Caddo, E. A. Burke of Orleans, and Robert Richardson of Ouachita were placed in nomination.³⁴ A deadlock ensued and, after failing to nominate a candidate on the fifty-seventh ballot, a committee of nine was

³⁰ *New Orleans Democrat*, May 2, 1878.

³¹ *Ibid.*, June 15, 1878.

³² *Ibid.*, August 16, 1878.

³³ *Ibid.*, September 16, 1878.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, August 6, 1878; *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, August 9, 1878.

appointed to devise a method to break it. The committee suggested that three informal ballots should be taken in the following order, Burke and Richardson, Burke and Moncure, and Richardson and Moncure, and that the one receiving the lowest aggregate number should be dropped. In accordance with the plan, Moncure was dropped after having led on the first fifty-seven ballots, and E. A. Burke was nominated on the next ballot.³⁵

The platform praised the Nicholls administration, denounced the admission of W. P. Kellogg by the Senate, and censured Congress for failure to promote internal improvements. It declared that the inability of the Republicans to produce witnesses before the Potter Committee to sustain their charges that the result of the election was due to wholesale murder, intimidation and fraud, proved that Louisiana's electoral votes had been wrongly cast for Hayes. It favored the issuance of greenbacks, demanded the repeal of the Resumption Act and extended sympathy to the laboring classes that had been thrown out of work by the ruinous financial policy of the Republicans.³⁶ Most of the delegates had been instructed to favor a constitutional convention and a resolution to that effect was adopted.³⁷

The various district delegates held conventions and nominated Representatives for Congress. The First District named R. L. Gibson; the Second, E. John Ellis; the Third, J. H. Acklin; the Fourth, J. B. Elam; and the Sixth, E. W. Robertson.³⁸

The National State Convention assembled in New Orleans on August 24. After calling the house to order, Robert J. Kerr, president of the State Central Committee, appointed F. W. Hatch temporary chairman.³⁹ Hatch was later elected permanent chairman and J. M. Hagins secretary. The only important work of the Convention was the introduction of a resolution authorizing the appointment of a committee to negotiate with the Republican Party with a view to forming a combination.⁴⁰

³⁵ *New Orleans Democrat*, August 8, 1878; *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, August 9, 1878.

³⁶ *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, August 9, 1878.

³⁷ *Opelousas Courier*, July 27, 1878; *New Orleans Democrat*, July 28, 1878; *St. Landry Democrat*, June 29, August 3, 1878.

³⁸ *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, August 9, 1878.

³⁹ *New Orleans Democrat*, August 25, 1878.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, August 27, 1878.

The Republican Convention which met in New Orleans on September 16 was embarrassed by the lack of a quorum.⁴¹ This was supposed to be the result of the yellow fever epidemic, but apparently it was not, for most of the leading radicals in the State appeared as delegates to the National Convention which met three days later.

When the Convention met on September 19, it was found to be composed of Radicals, Greenbackers, and Independents. The diverse elements succeeded in agreeing on the following ticket: Treasurer, John Gardner of East Baton Rouge; candidate for Congress for First District, H. C. Castellanos; Second, E. North Cullom; Fourth, J. Madison Wells; Fifth, John T. Ludeling; and Sixth, Tom Anderson.⁴² Due to its chaotic and mixed character the party did not enunciate any platform. The *New Orleans Democrat* asserted that it was better off without one since it was impossible for it to frame an honest and candid one.⁴³

The *Weekly Advocate* loudly denounced the new party as the result of the policy of Northern Republicans to divide the white people of the South, weaken the Democratic Party and insure the success of pronounced Radicals in doubtful districts. It declared that the work was engineered by the Custom-House faction and said it would not be surprised if the Radical Committee should endorse the National ticket.⁴⁴

The *Advocate* was right, for on October 8 the Republican State Committee met and endorsed the ticket.⁴⁵

Late in October a bomb was thrown into the political arena in the form of the so-called "Red Warrior exposé." It was claimed that the National Party was controlled by an inner secret organization known as the "Red Warrior" whose aim was to terrorize the naturalized citizens just prior to the election, and on election day to surround the polls and intimidate the voters.⁴⁶ In case the election went against them they were pledged to instigate riots and destroy ballot boxes.⁴⁷

The political situation was complicated by a split in the Democracy in Orleans Parish. On August 12, a faction calling

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, September 17, 1878.

⁴² *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, September 20, 1878.

⁴³ *New Orleans Democrat*, September 20, 1878.

⁴⁴ *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, September 20, 1878.

⁴⁵ *New Orleans Democrat*, October 9, 1878.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, October 21, 1878.

⁴⁷ *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, October 25, 1878.

itself the Citizens' Conservative Association of New Orleans, had issued an address to the people in which it was stated that its aim was to reform the management of party politics in the parish and to insure the nomination of men worthy of public honors by the Democrats. They said they would support the regular ticket only if the candidates were acceptable.⁴⁸ Friction soon developed between the regular Democrats and the Association members. The National State Central Committee, hoping to profit by the split, proposed the appointment of a joint committee to select a coalition ticket which would be acceptable to both National and Association members. The Conservative Association politely but firmly refused to enter into negotiations.⁴⁹ In addition to the National and Association tickets, the regular Democratic and the Mechanics and Laborers' tickets were placed in the field.⁵⁰

Late in September the election gave promise of being a violent one. On the 21st the Natchitoches Parish Democratic Convention adjourned and proceeded to break up a Republican ward meeting. The Democrats claimed that the Negroes had gathered in considerable numbers at the lower end of town and were being harangued by violent and incendiary speeches by A. R. Blount and E. J. Breda, and that their manner had become so threatening and insolent that in self-defense the Democratic citizens had assumed the aggressive and dispersed the mob.⁵¹

Local leaders were threatened and forced to leave the parish.⁵² On October 12, there was a disturbance near Waterproof. It was reported that the Negroes were armed and threatened to take the town. Captain J. S. Peck was killed when he led a posse to the home of Alfred Fairfax, a Negro candidate for Congress. The Democrats called upon the neighboring parishes for aid, and citizens from the adjoining parishes and from across the Mississippi River responded. Armed bodies of whites dispersed the Negroes and ran the leaders out of town. Fairfax was accused of murdering Peck and a warrant was sworn for his arrest.⁵³ In Concordia Parish, Dickey Smith (colored) was lynched and the Negroes maltreated.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ *New Orleans Democrat*, August 18, 1878.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, September 17, 1878.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, October 17, 18, November 2, 5, 1878.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, September 24, 1878; *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, September 27, 1878; *New Orleans Times*, January 4, 1879.

⁵² *New Orleans Times*, January 4, 1879; *New Orleans Democrat*, September 24, 1878.

⁵³ *New Orleans Democrat*, October 17, 18, 1878.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, October 26, 1878.

The election was held on November 5. It resulted in an overwhelming Democratic victory. They elected their candidate for Treasurer, E. A. Burke,⁵⁵ and all six Representatives to Congress from Louisiana, namely: R. L. Gibson, First District; E. J. Ellis, Second; J. H. Acklen, Third; J. B. Elam, Fourth; J. F. King, Fifth; and E. W. Robertson, Sixth.⁵⁶ Furthermore, the Democrats elected seventy-five members to the state house of representatives, the Republicans, eighteen, the Nationals, two, and the Independents, one. The Democrats elected twenty-five members to the state senate, and the Republicans only eleven.⁵⁷ Well might the Democratic rooster crow over his victory.

The people expressed their disapproval of the amendments by casting an overwhelming majority against all of them except the one removing the capital to Baton Rouge.⁵⁸

After the election rumors of fraud, bulldozing, and intimidation on the part of the Democrats in the parishes of Natchitoches, Tensas, Orleans, Madison, West Feliciana, Ouachita and Morehouse were prevalent.⁵⁹ The Democrats and the Republicans began to collect evidence of violence, each intent on placing the blame for the fraud and outrages on the other.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS OF THE ELECTION OF 1878 IN LOUISIANA

The Republicans claimed that the Democrats had carried the election of 1878 by fraud, intimidation, bulldozing, and remorseless slaughter of inoffensive voters. They maintained that Louisiana had been invaded by military forces of adjoining states and that the election had been controlled by armed bands. The Democrats blamed the Republicans for the outrages and asserted that the incendiary speeches of the Republican leaders had incited the Negroes to arm and menace the peace and prosperity of the whites. Charges flew thick and fast.

The Citizens' Conservative Association presented an address to Governor Nicholls denouncing the means by which the election had been carried in New Orleans and asking his support in the

⁵⁵ *House Miscellaneous Documents*, 46 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 12, Pt. I.

⁵⁶ *Report of the Secretary of State*, 1902, pp. 570-572.

⁵⁷ *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, November 22, 1878.

⁵⁸ *Appleton's Annual Cyclopaedia*, 1878, p. 505.

⁵⁹ *New Orleans Democrat*, December 10, 1878; *New Orleans Times*, January 4, 19, 1879.

righting of a great wrong. They asserted that, "with scarcely a pretence at concealment, unsanctioned by any form of law," great wrongs had been committed and the boldest "frauds perpetrated by the officers at many of the polls."¹ The Association sought an injunction to prevent the newly elected officials from assuming office,² but Judge Rightor of the Sixth District Court refused to issue it and the contest collapsed.³

The election of J. H. Acklen as Representative from the Third District was contested by Robert Hebert and W. B. Merchant.⁴ Both contestants claimed to have been the candidate of the Republican and National parties and to have been beaten by the other two by unfair means. The case was referred to the House Committee on Elections.⁵ The Committee investigated the case thoroughly but the contestants failed to file briefs, to appear before the Committee, or to show cause why the case should not be dropped. On recommendation of the Committee, the House adopted resolutions declaring Acklen elected.⁶

District Attorney Albert H. Leonard was very active in ferreting out all evidences of Democratic wrongdoings. He reported to his superior, Charles Devens, Attorney General of the United States:

Sir: I have the honor to transmit summary statement of wrongs and outrages connected with the election held in Louisiana on the 5th of November last, based on information received in my official capacity:

Caddo Parish—From fifty to seventy-five negroes killed, numbers driven from their homes, many assaulted and all intimidated. Republican meetings were disturbed by violent and armed men; Republican speakers insulted and Republican leaders threatened with violence and assassination. The parish should have gone Republican by over 2000 majority, but the Democrats openly took the election by force and fraud. Military companies were organized and appeared under arms. At one precinct, where 256 Republican and no Democratic votes were cast the box, list of voters, etc., were forcibly taken from the commissioners by a large body of armed men. The laws of the State and of the United States

¹ *New Orleans Democrat*, November 16, 1878.

² *Ibid.*, November 17, 1878.

³ *Ibid.*, November 18, 1878.

⁴ *Journal of the House of Representatives*, 46 Cong., 3 Sess., 546.

⁵ *House Miscellaneous Documents*, 46 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 12.

⁶ *Journal of the House of Representatives*, 46 Cong., 3 Sess., 546.

were flagrantly violated. United States supervisors were not permitted to do their duties, and Republican voters were driven from the polls.

Natchitoches Parish—At a political meeting held on the 14th of September last, in the town of Natchitoches, addressed by Hon. J. B. Elam, Democratic candidate for Congress from the fourth congressional district, and by other speakers, the Democrats were publicly told that they were not worthy to be called white men if they could not do away with fourteen or fifteen radical leaders.

Shortly thereafter the "doing away with" process commenced. The residences of prominent Republicans were surrounded at night, and the inmates aroused and alarmed by armed and disguised men.

The Democratic parochial convention, assembled on September 21, was scarcely called to order, when it was by motion adjourned so that its members might proceed to break up a Republican ward meeting held on the same day.

The chairman of the Republican parish committee, and other Republican leaders, were arrested at different times and places, outraged, insulted, threatened, and driven from the parish, with the final warning that they should certainly be killed should they ever again dare to enter its limits.

This parish is and has always been largely Republican but throughout its limits such scenes of violence were enacted, and such effective means of intimidation were resorted to by Democratic forces, organized and armed, as prevented the Republicans from exercising their right to vote.

Ouachita Parish: Democrats organized in companies, which, under arms, appeared frequently throughout the parish. Republican leaders were unarmed and prevented from making a canvass; Republican voters were generally and effectively intimidated and compelled to join Democratic clubs to save their lives.

The prominent local leaders of the Republican party were killed by a large company of armed men, and other negroes are reported to have been killed. In this parish, also, the negroes have a large majority.

Morehouse Parish: Judge Ludeling, Republican candidate for Congress, fifth congressional district, prevented from speaking, insulted, and driven from the parish.

Tensas Parish: Patrolled by armed forces from Mississippi and other parishes, fifty or more negroes killed, and numbers driven away. Negro majority in the parish very large.

New Orleans: At this place, judging from the affidavits made and the evidence adduced on trials before the commissioners, fraud was substituted for violence, and very little pains taken to conceal the fact.

I have heard of many outrages committed in Feliciana, Concordia, St. Mary's, St. Landry, Bossier, Rapides, Red River, Grant, and other parishes, but not as yet in a manner which authorizes official action.

Throughout Caddo, Natchitoches, Ouachita and Tensas, a reign of terror was inaugurated, which is still maintained and which will long continue. It is probable that such is also the case in many other parishes.

Our circuit court will be in session next week. A grand jury will at once be impaneled, and I am informed, many matters will be presented to the jury, to which my attention has not been called. As soon as it can be done I will prepare and forward to you a detailed report of what is herein generally stated, and also of all other cases which may be brought to my knowledge officially.⁷

In his annual message the Governor took cognizance of these acts of violence and disturbances which had supposedly occurred and which were uppermost in the public mind:

It is said that some of the troubles in this State, within the last year, have had their origin in politics. I do not suppose that there is any State in the Union in which politics have not been, more or less, the cause of difficulties. . . . Troubles do not exist in Louisiana based on opposition to any man voting on account of his color. . . . A difficulty originating in politics which goes to the point of blows or bloodshed, is apt to be participated in by others from time forward, not on account of the politics involved in it, but race sympathy or race fear. I found this, in my opinion (formed after a personal investigation), to have been the case in the recent disturbances in the parishes of Tensas and Concordia. The proximate cause of that trouble was the going at night of a party of men numbering from twenty to twenty-five to the house of one Fairfax, a colored political leader in Tensas parish, which act resulted in the killing of Peck (who seems to have been the leader of the party), and the wounding by Peck's companions of three colored men who were in Fairfax's house, one of whom afterwards died. The visit of these men to Fairfax was utterly wrong—in my opinion utterly without justification; and whilst attempted to be justified upon the ground that they went in the interest of peace to expostulate against a rumored proposed attempt

⁷ Report of A. H. Leonard to Charles Devens, in *New Orleans Times*, January 4, 1879.

of the colored people to force the quarantine lines at the town of St. Joseph, I am satisfied that such was not the purpose, but that it had a political object. I do not think the purpose was to kill or harm Fairfax, but I do believe it was to influence his course and the local campaign in the parish. The killing of Peck and the wounding of the colored men was, in my opinion, totally unexpected and attended by results which none of the parties contemplated, and from which political considerations utterly disappeared. Just as soon as these men were killed and wounded reports of the same spread with astonishing rapidity through Tensas and Concordia and instantly armed bodies of colored men, evidently organized prior thereto, moved from every direction to the scene of the occurrence. Whilst this was taking place the parish judge of Tensas, who had been informed of Peck's death, issued a warrant for the arrest of Fairfax who was charged with having killed him. Instead of either leaving the parish, if he believed himself about to be wronged, or at once surrendering to the authorities, who were pursuing the forms of law, Fairfax remained with the large number of men who had assembled, some of whom were making the most horrible threats. These threats produced a feeling of apprehension in the parish, and with events which followed, in my opinion, politics had nothing to do. The situation will be understood when I say that Tensas is a parish of large territorial extent, with an exceedingly sparse white and very dense colored population, the population being nearly as ten to one in the latter, and that the bodies of armed colored men parading through the parish are variously estimated from 1,000 to 2,000 men, whilst the white seem to have been totally unprepared. The fears entertained by the latter of general bloodshed and pillage, I am satisfied, were fully justified by appearances, and were beyond question thoroughly real. Their completely defenseless condition demonstrates at once the folly and wrong of the original act which brought about the situation, and also the fact that it was unexpected. I cannot conceive that men could wantonly and deliberately place the lives and property of their fellow-citizens in such peril as they were then in. Assistance was immediately called from neighboring parishes, and when it came it found the people of Tensas, white and black, almost solidly arrayed against each other.

It needed but a spark to ignite the train, and it was given by the firing of a body of colored men upon a party, under the parish judge, proceeding to put an end to the armed demonstration. This fire was returned, and from the best information I can receive, several persons were wounded, but none killed. The return fire caused the negroes

to disperse. In the meantime a negro set fire to a gin in the neighborhood of Waterproof, containing seventy bales of cotton. It was asserted that this was a signal for a general rally of the colored people. This man was afterwards, by some persons unknown, found and killed. This, together with the killing of another negro, also by persons unknown, were the only lives taken at that time that I have heard of.

The strife thus recklessly originated in the parish of Tensas spread to Concordia. Large bodies of armed colored men from that parish hurried towards Tensas and manifested their presence in various parts of the parish.

An armed body of white men, acting under a warrant for the arrest of Fairfax, who, it was supposed, had passed into Concordia, entered that parish for the purpose of the execution of the warrant, and whilst there some eight or nine colored men were killed.

On the return of the men from the adjacent parishes, who had gone to the assistance of the whites, quiet was gradually restored and everything is now peaceable.⁸

The Republicans, North and South, accused the Democrats of fraud and corruption. Southern States, hitherto Republican, had gone Democratic. The *Cincinnati Enquirer* asserted that the Republicans made no attempt to carry the South, and wanted it to go Democratic so they would have something about which to "whoop up campaign music" in the presidential election of 1880.⁹

The attack on the South was formally opened in the Senate by the introduction of resolutions by James G. Blaine of Maine on December 2, 1878. They provided that the Committee on the Judiciary should be instructed to inquire and report to the Senate whether at the recent elections, the constitutional rights of any citizens had been violated in any state.¹⁰ Blaine announced that the resolutions were introduced "to place on record in definite and authentic form, the frauds and outrages by which some recent elections were carried by the Democratic party in the Southern States" and "to find if there was any method to prevent a repetition of the crime against a free ballot."

⁸ *Louisiana Senate Journal*, 1879, pp. 9-11; *Louisiana House Journal*, 1879, pp. 8-10; *New Orleans Times*, January 8, 1879.

⁹ *Cincinnati Enquirer*, quoted in *New Orleans Democrat*, November 19, 1878.

¹⁰ *Journal of the Senate*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., p. 9; *Congressional Record*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., VIII, Pt. I, 2; *New Orleans Democrat*, December 4, 1878.

In his fierce and unprovoked denunciation he declared that in some of the Southern States, the elections had been "accompanied by fraud and violence; in not a few cases reaching the destruction of life; had been controlled by threats that awed and intimidated a large class of voters"; and had been "manipulated by fraud of the most shameless and shameful description." He pointed out that the South had been assigned thirty-five additional Representatives by reason of their colored population and that "the entire political power thus founded on the numbers of the colored people had been seized and appropriated to the aggrandizement of its own strength by the Democratic party of the South." He stated that Louisiana sent one Representative for every sixty thousand white people, while northern states such as Iowa and Wisconsin sent only one delegate for every one hundred and thirty-two thousand. He declared that the "colored citizen's" right of suffrage was "but hollow mockery"; that the Negro was "the unwilling instrument of increasing the political strength of that party from which he had received ever tightening fetters when he was a slave and the contemptuous refusal of civil rights since he was made free."¹¹

In commenting on Blaine's speech the *Democrat* said sarcastically: "Blaine wants an investigation. Let him have one. . . . Scarcely two years have elapsed since his zeal in the other direction was so warm that it produced an alleged sunstroke."¹²

It was decided by the Democrats in caucus to amend the resolutions so as to extend the scope of inquiry to include bulldozing in New Orleans and Cincinnati by Federal Supervisors and in Massachusetts by factory owners.¹³ It was known that the Republicans had intimidated the voters in the North and the Democrats desired to place on record Republican misdeeds as well as Democratic wrongdoings.

Allen G. Thurman of Ohio introduced an amendment which instructed the Committee on the Judiciary to inquire and determine whether Federal patronage had been used to influence the outcome of the elections, whether any assessment had been made on Federal employees for election purposes, and to inquire into the conduct of the United States supervisors of elections.

¹¹ *Congressional Record*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., VIII, Pt. I, 84-85.

¹² *New Orleans Democrat*, December 15, 1878.

¹³ *Ibid.*, December 4, 1878.

Thurman stated that in his opinion Blaine's resolutions were an attempt to provide a "string upon which to hang speeches to arouse sectional hatred in one portion of the Union against an almost defenceless people in another portion of the Union." He said that the political color line in the South resulted from the expenditure of millions of dollars by Freedmen's Bureau agents in organizing the blacks into Loyal Leagues, and in teaching them never to vote for a Democrat. In replying to Blaine's charges of fraud and violence on the part of the Democrats, he declared that the greatest menace to free elections was the use of corrupt money to influence elections and the "vast machinery of superintendents of elections, Federal supervisors, marshals, deputy marshals, and paid electioneers out of the Treasury of the United States under the guise of being men to preserve the freedom of suffrage and peace at elections."¹⁴

In a long address A. S. Merrimon defended the South. He said that Blaine's speech could serve "only to create a sensation, engender groundless discontents, revive sectional hatred, bitterness, and distrust, and rearray the colored people against the white people of the South, and by this means continue to impair the much needed unity of feeling among the American business people, injure their industries, and retard their business intercourse, their trade, and commerce." As to the Negroes voting the Democratic ticket, he said that thousands of colored men throughout the South had abandoned the Republican Party and voluntarily joined the Democrats because they believed their interests necessitated the change. He said that the decreased Negro vote was due to the fact that many had grown indifferent about voting since the novelty of it had worn off. He stated that the suggestion that there was a "general conspiracy or concerted purpose throughout the South to deprive the colored people of the right to vote" was "so improbable" and "so monstrous as to carry with it its own refutation."¹⁵

After long discussion and animated debate the resolutions were finally adopted by a vote of 56 to 6,¹⁶ in the following form:

Resolved, That a select committee to consist of nine Senators, be appointed by the chair to inquire and report to the Senate whether at the recent elections the constitutional rights of American Citizens were violated in any of the

¹⁴ *Congressional Record*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., VIII, Pt. I, 86-87.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 232-233.

States of the Union; whether the right of suffrage of citizens of the United States, or any class of such citizens, was denied or abridged by the action of the election officers of any state or the United States in refusing to receive their votes, in failing to count them, or in receiving and counting fraudulent ballots in pursuance of a conspiracy to make the lawful votes of such citizens of no effect; and whether such citizens were prevented from exercising the elective franchise, or forced to use it against their wishes by violence or threats, or hostile demonstrations of armed men or other organizations, or by any other unlawful means or practices. The committee shall also inquire whether any citizen of any State has been dismissed or threatened with dismissal from employment or deprivation of any right or privilege by reason of his vote or intention to vote at recent elections, or has been otherwise interfered with.

And to inquire whether, in the year 1878, money was raised, by assessment or otherwise upon Federal officeholders or employees for election purposes, and under what circumstances and by what means; and, if so, what amount was so raised and how the same was expended; and further, whether such assessments were or not in violation of the law.

And shall inquire into the action and conduct of United States supervisors of elections in the several States; and as to the number of marshals, deputy marshals, and others employed to take part in the conduct of the said elections; in what state or city appointed; the amount of money paid or promised to be paid to them, and how or by whom, and under what law authorized.

Resolved, That the committee be further instructed to inquire and report whether it is within the competency of Congress to provide by additional legislation for more perfect security of the right of suffrage to citizens of the United States in all the States in the Union.

Resolved, That in prosecuting these inquiries the committee shall have the right, by itself, or by any subcommittee, to send for persons and papers, to take testimony, to administer oaths, and to visit any portion of the country when such visit may in their judgment facilitate the object of the inquiry.¹⁷

The following were appointed by the Vice-President to serve on the select committee: H. M. Teller, chairman, Angus Cameron, S. J. Kirkwood, J. E. Bailey, A. H. Garland, W. A. Wallace, T.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 243.

F. Bayard, S. J. R. McMillan, and G. F. Hoar. A subcommittee composed of Senators Teller, Cameron, Kirkwood, Bailey, and Garland proceeded to New Orleans at once.¹⁸ The Committee arrived on January 6, and began taking testimony the next day.¹⁹ This was concluded on January 27,²⁰ and a month later the report was given to the Senate.²¹

The Committee asserted in their report that the election in Louisiana had been carried by fraud and violence²² and that thirty or forty murders had been committed.²³ They declared that in Ward One, Caddo Parish, the poll had been located at the extreme northern end of the parish so that the voters were compelled to travel at least twenty miles in order to vote.²⁴ Without a doubt the Democrats did place the Willis House box at an inconvenient place so that the Negroes could not get there to vote. The Democrats claimed, however, that before the Nicholls regime, there wasn't any ballot box at all in that country and the voters had had to go forty-five miles in order to cast their votes.²⁵

In spite of precautions, scores of Negroes voted at the Willis House box. After the election, an armed mob took possession of the box and destroyed it.²⁶ The Democrats claimed that the Negroes had been voting in an illegal box,²⁷ but the most feasible explanation for the destruction of the box was the fact that an overwhelming majority of the voters were Negroes and white Republicans.²⁸

The Democrats were accused of using three boxes at the polls when only two were legal.²⁹ They explained that they had consulted prominent lawyers who had assured them that the use of three boxes was not illegal.³⁰

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 237.

¹⁸ *Senate Reports*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., IV, 5-6.

¹⁹ *New Orleans Times*, January 7, 1879.

²⁰ *New Orleans Democrat*, January 28, 1879.

²¹ *Congressional Record*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., VIII, Pt. III, 1974.

²² *Senate Reports*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., IV, No. 855, pp. 27-28.

²³ *Ibid.*, 24.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 31, 37-38, 97; *New Orleans Times*, January 19, 1879.

²⁵ *Senate Reports*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., IV, No. 855, p. 87; *New Orleans Times*, January 19, 1879.

²⁶ *Senate Reports*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., IV, No. 855, pp. vii, 16, 35-36.

²⁷ *New Orleans Times*, January 19, 1879.

²⁸ *Senate Reports*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., IV, No. 855, pp. vii, 12.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. vii, 88, 95.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. viii, 95, 110.

On the day of the election there was no outbreak except at Caledonia. The report said the Negroes had stored arms in a certain Madison Reams' house and that the whites had collected arms nearby. During the afternoon Deputy Sheriff D. B. McNeal was ordered to disarm the Negroes. He went unarmed to the house and firing began. The sheriff and G. W. Norwood were wounded and two men were killed. The Committee failed to place the blame for the first shot on either side but insinuated that the whites were guilty.³¹ After the fray the Negroes who had participated offered no resistance but fled to the swamps. A posse of whites searched for them and killed approximately twenty.³²

In Natchitoches the registered voters numbered 1,830 whites and 1,963 blacks.³³ Nevertheless, the parish cast 2,819 votes for the Democratic candidate for Congress, J. B. Elam, and not a single vote for the Republican candidate, J. M. Wells.³⁴ This is the best proof that the election was carried by intimidation and fraud on the part of the Democrats.

The Committee reported that the Democratic Parochial Convention had adjourned to break up a Republican ward meeting and to intimidate the leaders.³⁵ The home of A. R. Blount, prominent Republican leader, was entered by an armed posse under M. J. Cunningham and Blount was arrested. Later he was released after promising to leave the parish. The two Breda brothers, A. P. and J. E., were also forced to leave the parish. All the prominent leaders were driven out in order to prevent the Radicals from putting a ticket in the field. All the votes cast were accredited to the Democrats.³⁶

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. viii, 51, 66, 83-84, 106. G. W. Norwood, the first man wounded, claimed that the Negroes had fired first. D. B. McNeal, the sheriff, claimed that they had gone unarmed to quiet the Negroes and that they were met with a volley of shots. For some unknown reason the Committee refused to believe them.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. ix, 66-67, 107-108.

³³ *Report of the Secretary of State*, 1902, p. 546.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 571.

³⁵ *Senate Reports*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., IV, No. 855, pp. x, xi, 125-126, 132, 147, 165, 540-543. The testimony, both Republican and Democratic, proves without a doubt that the Democrats adjourned for the purpose of breaking up the Republican meeting.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. xi-xiii, 116-117, 126-127, 132-137, 148-149, 155-156, 493, 508-512. The Democrats claimed that they feared the Negroes would organize and attack the whites, and their fears were not altogether groundless because the Negro population was 10,929 while the white population was only 7,312. The Republican leaders were making incendiary speeches which tended to inflame and excite the Negroes. However, the majority of the Negroes seemed to be peaceably inclined.

The Committee pointed out that the population of Tensas Parish in 1870 was 1,400 whites and 11,018 colored.³⁷ When the Republican Parochial Convention assembled on October 5, the Committee reported, it was decided not to run a separate Republican ticket because of threats made by leading Democrats. A conference committee was appointed to form a compromise ticket acceptable to both parties, but the Democrats refused to negotiate. A few Democrats, however, started an independent movement which resulted in the nomination of the so called "Bland and Douglas" ticket, which was endorsed by a subsequent Republican convention.³⁸

On October 12, a band of armed men, under the command of J. S. Peck, invaded the house of Fairfax. Fairfax fled and took refuge in the swamp. A man by the name of Willie Singleton was wounded by Peck. As he lay on the floor several others shot him and he subsequently died. The Negroes attempted to escape and several were wounded. In the excitement Peck was killed. The Committee seemed to believe that he was killed by some of his men who were firing into the house from the street.³⁹

Fairfax was immediately charged with murder, although Peck had come some twenty-five miles and assembled an armed band for the purpose of unwantonly attacking Fairfax's house. All evidence tended to prove that the Negro was of high character and that the community was quiet and orderly that night except for threats of violence made against the blacks, should they attempt to nominate a Republican ticket.⁴⁰

It was claimed that two days later large numbers of Negroes appeared in Waterproof, making threats against the white people, but evidence did not establish the charge. However, a mob of four hundred Negroes had gathered at Bass's Lane on Sunday, but to all outward appearances it was a peaceable affair. Nevertheless, on Tuesday a posse of about fifty armed men led by Deputy Sheriff Cordill went to Bass's Lane, fired into the Negro quarters and killed eight and wounded many others. The deputy

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. xiii. This approximated the ratio suggested in the Governor's message. *Louisiana Senate Journal*, 1879, p. 10.

³⁸ *Senate Reports*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., IV, No. 855, pp. xiii, xiv, 169-170, 194, 210, 230-231.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. xiv, xv, 174-175, 178-180, 184-186, 188-189, 191.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, xv, and Testimony of L. D. Reeves, pp. 288-289, 303, and of H. Moses, pp. 399-403. This is contradicted by Reeves and Moses. Without a doubt there was a tendency on the part of the Negroes to be overbearing and arrogant, and to create disturbances. One Negro burned a gin belonging to a Mr. Barney. Nevertheless, it does seem that the attack on Fairfax's house was unreasonable, uncalled for and inexcusable.

sheriff claimed that he had gone to disperse the armed bands of Negroes and that they had fired upon him. However, the Committee considered it improbable that the Negroes had fired first.⁴¹

After the affray and until election day armed bodies of white men from not only Tensas, but also Franklin, Catahoula, and Concordia parishes rode through the parish whipping, shooting and hanging Negroes. The Negroes were threatened with death if they voted the Bland-Douglas ticket. Colored leaders were forced to leave the parish and excitement ran so high that no political meetings were held. The election naturally resulted in the triumph of the regular Democratic ticket. If they couldn't win by voting, they made it a point to win by counting.⁴²

The Parish of Concordia was seriously affected by the condition of affairs in Tensas, according to the report of the Committee. It was asserted that raiding parties had overrun the parish, intimidating and frightening the Negroes who fled into the swamps. The parish with a population of 673 whites and 10,796 colored voters elected all the Democratic candidates except one.⁴³

In Point Coupée Parish the campaign was begun in April. The Democrats had threatened to hang the Negroes if they should make any attempt to reorganize the Republican Party, and declared that all blacks who did not vote the Democratic ticket would have to leave the parish. Five Negroes were hanged in June for alleged firing upon a Democratic candidate. In August and September a reign of terror was instituted. Radical leaders were visited at night by armed bands of white men, whipped, shot at, or driven away. On election day the Negroes were forced to vote the Democratic ticket.⁴⁴

The most damaging part of the report dealt with St. Mary Parish which was largely Republican. Prior to the election, the parish was quarantined on account of the yellow fever epidemic and many of the Negroes could not get to town to vote. The day after the election the quarantine was lifted. It was claimed that it should have been lifted sooner. Despite this, the Republicans carried the parish. The Democratic managers attempted to make false returns but the Republican sheriff discovered the plot and frustrated it. The poll books were placed in the recorder's

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. xvi-xvii, 172-173, 192, 264-266, 283, 297, 308, 337.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. xvi-xvii, 176, 213-214, 230, 237, 271-273, 286, 297-299.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. xvii-xix, 358-359, 361-363.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. xix-xx, 355-356, 359, 361-364, 411, 420-421.

office for safekeeping. That night the two offices were broken into and the poll books, ballot boxes, tickets, returns, and tally sheets were destroyed.⁴⁵

But the clerk of court had made a duplicate copy of the returns and tally sheets. On November 8, his office was raided but the duplicates were not secured. The next evening the district attorney pro tem went to G. R. Newman's house and, pretending he had a telegram from the district attorney, demanded the duplicates. The clerk offered copies but refused to surrender the duplicates or reveal their whereabouts.⁴⁶ On the nineteenth his house was broken into and shots fired into the bed where he was sleeping. He fatally wounded one man, Tom Wilson, and injured his brother who was the district attorney. No investigation was made and no inquest held.⁴⁷

The Committee said that "no severer comment could be made on the character of Governor Nicholls and home rule in Louisiana than these facts."⁴⁸ The report also declared that the election in New Orleans had been carried by fraud and intimidation.⁴⁹

Without a doubt the Democrats carried the election in the parishes of Caddo, Natchitoches, Tensas, Concordia, and Pointe Coupée through intimidation of the Negroes, or where that failed, by violence. Yet they cannot be judged too harshly, for in this campaign the struggle for white supremacy reached its climax. It was not a struggle between the Democratic Party and the Republican Party but a fight between the whites and the blacks. It would seem that under the circumstances the Committee was rather severe and partisan in its findings.

The Committee was referred to as the "outrage mill"⁵⁰ and its findings alluded to as "Teller talk"⁵¹ and "More Bulldozing Stories."⁵² The *Democrat* declared that the testimony "given before the Teller Committee to sustain the charge of violence and intimidation was based upon the difficulties which grew out of the arrogance and overbearing conduct of some of the negro leaders, and which they saw fit to construe into an attempt to prevent a free expression of opinion."⁵³

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. xxi-xxii, 381-382, 387, 392-393.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. xxii, 382, 387, 392-393.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. xxii-xxiii, 382, 387-388, 390-391, 394-395.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. xxiii.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. xxiii-xxiv.

⁵⁰ *New Orleans Times*, January 9, 1879.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, January 17, 1879.

⁵² *New Orleans Democrat*, January 9, 1879.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, March 2, 1879.

Yet the work of the Committee did not create the furor that might be expected. The investigations proved that the Republicans had resorted to as much fraud to win elections in the North as the Democrats had in the South. Since the score was even and neither side could make political capital out of the reports, there was a peace without victory. The only result of the investigations in the South was the introduction of a bill in the Senate by W. A. Wallace to enforce the provisions of Section Two of the Fourteenth Amendment.⁵⁴

Perhaps the main reason why the report was barely considered in Louisiana was the fact that it was obscured by the arrest of several hundred white Democrats on charges of fraud and corruption in the election. In Natchitoches Parish, Ernest Masson, A. Debleaux, Samuel O. Scruggs, J. Hertzhog, Jackson Beard, James C. Johnson, William A. Hart, Washington Corkfield, and J. B. D. Rachal were arrested on an affidavit sworn by J. R. Hornsby, who charged that they had run him out of the parish and had thus prevented him from voting for J. Madison Wells.⁵⁵ They were brought to New Orleans and arraigned in the United States Circuit Court. Before they were tried fifty-seven citizens were arrested upon the testimony given by J. Ernest Breda, A. P. Breda, Alfred A. Blount, and Virgin Barron before the Teller Committee.⁵⁶ The accused were the best citizens in the parish and included all the parish officers, the district attorney, and the district judge. Senator B. F. Jonas said it was almost a disgrace not to be arrested since most of the prominent citizens were indicted.⁵⁷

The arrest of the Natchitoches citizens was followed by an epidemic of indictments. In Tensas Parish some one hundred citizens were arrested for violating election laws,⁵⁸ eight of whom were charged with shooting and injuring Fleming Branch, Daniel Canada, and Willie Singleton.⁵⁹ In Caddo Parish fifty-seven commissioners of election were indicted for using three boxes at the polls instead of two as specified by law.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ *Congressional Record*, 46 Cong., 2 Sess., X, Pt. III, 2999. As far as could be ascertained, no further action was ever taken on the bill.

⁵⁵ *New Orleans Times*, January 7, 1879.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, February 2, 6, 1879.

⁵⁷ *Congressional Record*, 46 Cong., 1 Sess., IX, Pt. II, 1479.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 1480.

⁵⁹ *New Orleans Times*, January 19, 1879.

⁶⁰ *Congressional Record*, 46 Cong., 1 Sess., IX, Pt. II, 1480.

The arrest of the citizens by Federal authority was severely denounced by the press. It was asserted that they had been indicted by a partisan grand jury on testimony of disreputable witnesses. The *Democrat*, in a fiery condemnation, said that the object of the Republicans was "not the vindication of law, nor the punishment of crime, nor the protection of liberty" but "to intimidate and overawe the Democrats and Conservatives of Louisiana; to deter them from henceforth taking any active part in politics, . . . and to force them to abandon the control of the government and its congressional and elective representation to the Radical leaders of the negroes."⁶¹ The *Capitolian* said "it would seem that the lessons of the past" had been "insufficient to teach the fraudulent and usurping administration of Mr. Hayes, that the Russian policy of persecution for political ends and to obtain supremacy" would not "operate advantageously to his party."⁶²

On the last day of the session, the Louisiana Legislature passed the following resolutions protesting against the interference of Federal authorities and courts in Louisiana affairs:

Whereas, the Constitution of the United States has not conferred the right of suffrage upon any one, and the United States have no voters of their own creation, but the matter of suffrage is left entirely with the States themselves, with the reservation of the provisions of the fifteenth amendment, which has invested the citizens of the United States with a new constitutional right, to wit: the exemption from discrimination in the exercise of the elective franchise on account of race or color or previous condition of servitude;

Whereas, the functions of Congress, under this constitutional amendment, are limited to permit, by proper legislations the denial or abridgement by a State of the right of a citizen to vote when the denial or abridgement is on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude of the voter;

Resolved, that sections 5506, 5507, 5508, and 5509 of the Revised Statutes of the United States are in derogation of the Constitution of the United States and the amendments thereof, in this,—that the Federal government, by these sections, assumes plenary jurisdiction of the matter of suffrage without reference to the action of the States as such, and without interference on their part to deny or abridge the right of suffrage as indicated in the said constitutional amendments.

⁶¹ *New Orleans Democrat*, February 1, 1879.

⁶² *Louisiana Capitolian*, February 15, 1879.

Resolved, That the proceedings in the United States Circuit Court at New Orleans against citizens of various parts of the State of Louisiana and the subjecting of numerous citizens thereof to the hardships of arrest from distant homes and their removal to New Orleans, to be there tried for alleged offences against the above stated sections of the Revised Statutes are pregnant with the gravest consequences; and the people of this state cannot but protest energetically against such harsh and unwarrantable proceedings.

Resolved, That this protest of the State of Louisiana, which by her laws, and in her courts, does make no discrimination between her citizens on account of race or color or previous condition of servitude, be respectfully laid before the President of the United States, and the Senate, and the House of Representatives of the United States.⁶³

The Caddo Parish Democratic Convention protested against the arrest of her citizens as follows:

Whereas the federal administration in a systematic course of persecution in the Southern States, the most formidable and unparalleled in the annals of the republic, using the courts of the United States for basest partisan purposes, has taken a large number of the peaceable and law abiding citizens of this parish from their business avocations and their homes and thereby entailing suffering and irretrievable ruin upon many, for no other crime than the exercise of their inalienable rights as free men, guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States from the foundation of the American Government; therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Democratic party in convention assembled, enter their solemn protest against these acts of high-handed tyranny and shameless perversion of the forms of law for the purposes of intimidation.

Resolved, that the Democracy of Caddo stand as one man by the victims of these persecutions who are now under arrest and indictment in New Orleans; that their political acts in the election of 1878 were the acts of the Democratic party of Caddo; that we consider our responsibility for these acts equal with theirs; that the cause of our suffering citizens is the cause of the Democratic party of Caddo Parish, whether they be acquitted or condemned as felons, we shall ever regard their acts as those of highest patriotism done for the general good of the whole people and that they are therefore guiltless.

⁶³ *New Orleans Democrat*, February 4, 1879.

Resolved, that we pledge the Democratic party to stand by them through all their trials and sufferings, and that we call upon the people of Caddo, irrespective of race or party, to rally to the polls, and by their election of nominees of this convention,⁶⁴ condemn these cruel persecutions and stamp with approval the principles we have advocated in the past, and which we pledge ourselves unflinchingly to maintain in the future in the face of all opposition and decrees of the Federal courts.⁶⁵

Only forty-eight of the prisoners from Natchitoches were tried. They were brought before Judge Woods and pleaded not guilty.⁶⁶ The jury was impaneled and every man who could not take the test oath was excluded. Most of the witnesses who had appeared before the Teller Committee testified at the trial in addition to many who had not.⁶⁷ In spite of the fact that the jury was composed of persons who had not aided, abetted or sympathized with the Confederate cause, they returned a verdict of "not guilty."⁶⁸

The outcome was received with great rejoicing throughout the state. The ex-prisoners were escorted to the boat by Captain Cain's Company of Orleans Artillery, and the field band. Two salutes of twenty-five guns each were fired by Captain Sambola Jones's Company. Huge crowds thronged at the landing to bid them goodbye. It was a gala occasion.

The *New Orleans Times* declared that the "backbone of the political persecutions" had been broken and the verdict "which sent forty-eight of the best and most prominent citizens of the state back to their homes" could be accepted as a precedent for most if not all of the cases then pending. It said that the jury had been "selected with greatest care, and each juror could and did take the test oath," and that it was acceptable to both sides.⁶⁹

The Caddo prisoners were tried by a jury composed of eight Negroes and four whites,⁷⁰ but it was unable to agree. Judge Woods declared a mistrial, discharged the jury and left the case

⁶⁴ This refers to the nominees for delegates to the Constitutional Convention.

⁶⁵ *New Orleans Times*, March 10, 1879.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, February 25, 1879.

⁶⁷ *Congressional Record*, 46 Cong., 1 Sess., IX, Pt. II, 1479.

⁶⁸ *Opelousas Courier*, March 15, 1879; *New Orleans Democrat*, March 8, 1879.

⁶⁹ *New Orleans Times*, March 8, 1879.

⁷⁰ *Congressional Record*, 46 Cong., 1 Sess., IX, Pt. II, 1479.

over until the next fall.⁷¹ When the Tensas case was called, District Attorney Leonard arose and asked for a continuance of the trials until fall.⁷² A careful search of newspaper files failed to reveal any evidence that the cases were called up again.

Thus the work of the Teller Committee and the persecution of citizens of Louisiana in the United States Courts failed to make Republican thunder for the presidential campaign of 1880. The committee had proven that the Republicans were as guilty of corruption, intimidation, bulldozing and fraud in the election of 1878 as the Democrats, and the courts had failed to get a single conviction.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION AND THE ELECTION OF 1879

Immediately after the results of the election of 1878 were announced the public began to clamor for a new constitution. The *Claiborne Guardian* said that the verdict had been pronounced and recorded and that the majority against the amendments stood in place of positive instructions. It declared that the lawmakers would have to shape their action accordingly.¹

Public sentiment crystalized in favor of a short session of the Legislature for the purpose of providing for a constitutional convention.² The Legislature convened on January 6, 1879. The House had scarcely organized before a bill providing for a convention and making an appropriation to pay its expenses was introduced.³ It was passed by a vote of 74 to 29 on January 13.⁴ Two days later the Senate concurred and informed the House of its action.⁵

The election for delegates which was held March 13, 1879, was extremely quiet.⁶ Of the 134 members elected, 98 were Democrats, 32 Republicans, 2 Nationals and 2 Independents.⁷

⁷¹ New Orleans *Daily Picayune*, March 13, 1879.

⁷² New Orleans *Democrat*, April 10, 1879.

¹ *Claiborne Guardian*, quoted in *St. Landry Democrat*, December 14, 1878. Previously the *Guardian* had bitterly opposed a new constitution, but the results of the election had changed its viewpoint.

² *Morehouse Clarion*, quoted in *St. Landry Democrat*, December 14, 1878.

³ *Louisiana House Journal*, 1879, p. 24.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 33-34.

⁵ *Louisiana Senate Journal*, 1879, p. 38.

⁶ *St. Landry Democrat*, March 22, 1879.

⁷ *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, April 25, 1879.

The delegates were informed as to what they were expected to accomplish, through the newspapers. The *Coushatta Citizen* published the following list of duties:

1st. To establish a simple republican form of government, with just as few officers as possible; the salaries to be in keeping with the duties of the office and the ability of the people to pay.

2d. To reorganize the Judiciary and cause litigation to be prompt and cheap; salaries of judges to be reduced; parish attorneys, and no district attorneys.

3d. Provisions made for public education with regard to race.

4th. A limitation to public debt.

5th. Establishment of a permanent seat of government at Baton Rouge.

6th. Reduce the rate of interest to four per cent.

7th. A thorough investigation of the funded debt, and provision for the payment of honest obligations.

8th. A reduction of taxes to not more than six mills.⁸

The Convention, which assembled in the Hall of the House of Representatives in New Orleans, April 21, was called to order by Governor Nicholls. L. A. Wiltz was elected president over Pierre Landry by a vote of 102 to 27. On motion of T. T. Allain, the election was made unanimous.⁹

The Negroes in the state feared that the Convention was contemplating action which would deprive them of the privileges which they had attained as a result of the Civil War. There were rumors that they were planning a general exodus to Kansas. In order to assure them that it was not the intention of the Convention to impair or restrict their rights, J. A. Stevenson introduced the following resolutions:

Whereas, there is today a feeling of apprehension and alarm on the part of the colored citizens of this State, with regard to the intended action of the convention, it is deemed proper in advance of any official action of this body, to disabuse their minds of any such apprehension; therefore,

⁸ *Coushatta Citizen*, quoted in *Louisiana Capitolian*, April 26, 1879.

⁹ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, April 22, 1879.

Be it resolved, That there is no intention whatsoever entertained by this body of impairing or restricting the rights of any class of the citizens of this State, but, on the contrary, the intention is to defend and perpetuate every and all rights now guaranteed them by this State and by the Constitution of the United States.

Judge Land objected to the resolution on the ground that it pledged the Convention in advance of any deliberation not to adopt any system of qualification for suffrage. He offered the following substitute which was accepted by a vote of 76 to 49.

Resolved, That there is no intention whatsoever entertained by this body of impairing or restricting the political, civil or religious rights of any class of citizens of this state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude, but on the contrary, the intention is to defend and maintain the rights of the colored citizens as guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and of this State, under the new constitution about to be formed.¹⁰

There were three major problems confronting the Convention, namely, the debt, capital, and suffrage questions. The most difficult to solve was the debt question. In the Convention there were three factions, one in favor of repudiating, another in favor of scaling, and a third in favor of paying all the debt.¹¹ The task of finding a solution acceptable to all three factions as well as the state at large was not an easy one.

The *Morehouse Clarion* expressed the attitude of the majority when it declared itself "flatly, firmly, and solidly opposed to the repudiation of a single dollar of the honest indebtedness of the State" but in favor of "forcing the holders of all just and valid State bonds, if compulsion should become necessary, to accept a lower rate of interest" than that which the state was then paying.¹² The *Louisiana Capitolian* favored payment of the debt, but declared that it should be thoroughly investigated and "every cent" that was found to be "spurious" "thrown overboard."¹³ The *Picayune* asserted that the state was "bound by every dictate of personal and public honor, by every dictate of Statehood and manhood" to pay as much as it could of what it honestly and

¹⁰ *New Orleans Times*, April 24, 1879.

¹¹ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, July 9, 1879.

¹² *Morehouse Clarion*, quoted in *St. Landry Democrat*, July 5, 1879.

¹³ *Louisiana Capitolian*, March 29, 1879.

legally owed.¹⁴ Very few papers favored absolute repudiation because it was feared that such action would prove fatal to the material interests in Louisiana by causing capital to flee and by prostrating commerce.¹⁵

The Committee of Eighteen which had been appointed by the chairman of the Convention to consider the debt question reported May 31. The amount of the total state debt was found to be \$27,987,500. The majority report recommended the payment of only \$4,082,358 of the amount to be distributed as follows:

In aid of the New Orleans and Nashville Railroad Company	\$ 458,000
For the relief of State Treasury authorized by Act 277 of 1853.....	698,500
For moneys due the free school fund which was destroyed by Act 81 of 1872.....	1,193,500
For moneys due the seminary fund which was destroyed by Act 81 of 1872.....	136,000
For the Louisiana State Penitentiary, authorized by Act 55 of 1879.....	500,000
For valid unpaid warrants and certificates of indebtedness issued by the Auditor of Public Accounts previous to the first day of January, 1879....	1,096,358

The minority objected strenuously to the majority report. Their report said: "The mind is dazed by the annulment of nearly twelve millions of bonds by a stroke of the pen; and although in times of revolution, when the imagination is superheated by political excitement, such an extraordinary act may be accepted as the necessity of the occasion; one cannot witness it in the midst of profound peace without grave apprehension of its justice and propriety." The report recommended the appointment of a special committee of nine to ascertain whether or not an equitable adjustment of the debt could be effected.¹⁶

The report became the target of newspaper attacks. The *New Orleans Times* labeled the majority report "the most immoral, the most dishonorable, and the most suicidal proposition ever submitted to any legislature or convention assembly in any civilized country in the world," "a work of criminal folly," "the burial of the credit of the commonwealth," and "the black flag of repu-

¹⁴ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, June 3, 1879.

¹⁵ *St. Landry Democrat*, June 14, 1879.

¹⁶ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, June 1, 1879.

diation itself."¹⁷ The *Thibodeaux Sentinel* said the people of Louisiana would not sustain "any such wholesale repudiation."¹⁸ The *Lake Charles Echo* said repudiation had an "ugly sound" and would lead to "ugly consequences."¹⁹ The *St. Landry Democrat* characterized the minority report as "a sound, conservative, legal refutation of the pernicious revolutionary, and Mexicanizing doctrines enunciated in the report of the majority," and expressed hope that there would be enough "independence and manhood" in the Convention to lead to the "unequalled rejection of the majority report."²⁰ The *New Orleans Democrat* said that the record of Louisiana was "utterly free from the stain of a denial of her lawful obligations," and it would never be stained by an act of repudiation with its approval. However, it stated that a blot could not be "inflicted" by an "inability to pay" or by "relief" which should be asked and granted by the state's creditors.²¹ The *Daily Picayune* said that the state should acknowledge all that it owed and pay what it could, and declared that such action could not be termed repudiation even though some loss to the creditors would necessarily ensue.²²

It was evident that the report expressed neither the duty, willingness, nor the ability of the state to pay and that it did not meet public expectations.²³ It was foredoomed to failure. The majority report was lost by 40 yeas to 89 nays and the minority report by 47 yeas to 82 nays.²⁴

The debt question became the subject of a series of long and heated debates. Unsuccessful attempts were made to scale the debt to \$.75 and to \$.50 on the dollar.²⁵ The Convention found it impossible to distinguish the valid from the fraudulent bonds. In order to reach a solution the Convention was forced to compromise with the bondholders. The so-called debt ordinance which was finally adopted by the Convention by a vote of 71 yeas to 41 nays read as follows:

Article 1. Be it ordained, That the interest to be paid on the consolidated bonds by the State of Louisiana be and

¹⁷ *New Orleans Times*, June 1, 1879.

¹⁸ *Thibodeaux Sentinel*, quoted in *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, June 20, 1879.

¹⁹ *Lake Charles Echo*, quoted in *ibid.*, June 20, 1879.

²⁰ *St. Landry Democrat*, June 7, 1879.

²¹ *New Orleans Democrat*, June 1, 1879.

²² *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, June 3, 8, 1879.

²³ *Ibid.*, June 3, 1879.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, July 1, 1879.

²⁵ *New Orleans Times*, July 18, 1879.

is hereby fixed at two per cent. for five years from the first of January, 1880, three per cent. for 15 years, and four per cent. thereafter; and there shall be levied an annual tax sufficient for the full payment of said interest, not exceeding three mills, the limit of all state tax being hereby fixed at 6 mills. Provided, The holders of consolidated bonds may, at their option, demand in exchange for the bonds held by them, bonds of the denomination of five dollars, one hundred dollars, five hundred dollars, one thousand dollars, to be issued at the rate of seventy-five cents on the dollar of bonds held and to be surrendered by such holders, the said new issue to bear interest at the rate of 4% per annum, payable semi-annually.

Article 2. The holders of the consolidated bonds may at any time present their bonds to the Treasurer of the State, or to an agent to be appointed by the Governor—one in the City of New York and the other in the city of London—and the Treasurer or agent, as the case may be, shall endorse or stamp thereon the words, "interest reduced to two per cent. for five years from January 1, 1880, three per cent. for fifteen years and four per cent. thereafter; provided, the holders of said bonds may apply to the Treasurer for an exchange of bonds as provided in the proceeding article."

Article 3. Be it further ordained, That the coupons of said consolidated bonds falling due first of January in the year 1880, be and the same is hereby remitted, and any interest tax collected to meet said coupons are hereby transferred to defray the expenses of the State Government.²⁶

After the debt question had been settled the Convention centered its attention on the suffrage question. There was sentiment in favor of curtailing the Negro vote by property or educational qualifications or by a registration system. However, the Democratic Party had pledged itself in 1876 to protect the Negroes in the privileges they had acquired if they would help with their vote to oust the carpetbag and scalawag plunderers who then held the reins of government. Consequently the Democrats could not fix any qualification that would disfranchise a large majority of the colored voters without breaking their solemn promise. Furthermore the Negroes had increased Louisiana's representation in the lower house of Congress. Any suffrage qualifications would reduce the voting population fifty per cent and the number of Representatives in proportion.²⁷ *The New Orleans*

²⁶ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, July 22, 1879. Provisions were made in the new Constitution for a special election to be held for its ratification or rejection.

²⁷ *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, quoted in *Louisiana Capitolian*, July 5, 1879.

Times expressed the general opinion when it deemed it "unwise and impolitic as well as essentially unjust and hostile to the spirit of our institutions to place any restrictions whatsoever upon the exercise of the right of suffrage."²⁸ In face of the opposition, the Convention deemed it "unwise" to place any restrictions which might discriminate against the Negroes.

There was a movement in favor of woman suffrage. Mrs. E. L. Saxon delivered an address before the Convention in which she gave a dozen or more reasons why women should be allowed to vote. A special session was devoted to able addresses on the subject.²⁹ Nevertheless, the men believed that the mixed nature of the voting population made politics a sphere in which ladies did not belong.³⁰

The *New Orleans Times* asserted that the politics of Louisiana were so dark and dismal that the public would shudder to see the women engaged in the work of restoration even with a sure prospect of success.³¹ The movement was premature and consequently received only the scant attention demanded by common courtesy. The members of the Convention listened attentively to the arguments and then promptly forgot them.

The agitation in favor of moving the capital to Baton Rouge came to a head in the Convention. The previous fall a vote had been taken to see whether the capital was to remain in New Orleans or to be moved to Baton Rouge. When the count was taken Baton Rouge claimed that she had been selected. New Orleans contended that there had been a mistake in the election and that many had voted for Baton Rouge thinking they were voting for New Orleans. It was finally left for the Convention to settle.

The newspapers throughout the state took sides on the question. The *Ouachita Telegraph* said: "The vote on the State Capital question last fall had a meaning, and explained itself too clearly to be overlooked or misunderstood. It was an unqualified and unconditional declaration to the members of the convention that Baton Rouge, and not New Orleans, should be the seat of government."³² The *Clinton Patriot Democrat* warned the delegates of the country parishes to be on the alert as New Orleans was

²⁸ *New Orleans Times*, July 2, 1879.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, June 17, 1879; *New Orleans Democrat*, June 17, 1879.

³⁰ *New Orleans Times*, June 19, 1879.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ouachita Telegraph*, quoted in *Louisiana Capitolian*, May 3, 1879.

determined to run the ship of state and to secure the capital for New Orleans.³³ The *Vienna Sentinel* asserted that the wishes of a majority of over six thousand in favor of Baton Rouge as the capital could not be ignored.³⁴ The New Orleans *Picayune* said that the many evident advantages that New Orleans had over all other cities should outweigh the only special claim Baton Rouge had, namely more elegant and commodious buildings.³⁵ When the vote was taken in the Convention the capital was located at Baton Rouge by a vote of 84 ayes to 24 nays.³⁶

The Convention completed its labors on July 23.³⁷ The proposed constitution contained three articles which were designed to prevent a recurrence of radical, scalawag and carpetbag rule. It emphatically stipulated that the "military should be subordinate to the civil power."³⁸ Each law enacted was to have but one object and that was to be clearly stated in the title.³⁹ Five years' state residence and two years' district or parish residence were declared necessary for a person to be eligible as a member of the General Assembly.⁴⁰

As a result of the people's experiences with the nondescript and irresponsible legislatures under the preceding constitution, a deep-seated distrust of legislative action had grown up in the public mind. In the new Constitution the Legislature was prohibited to draw money from the treasury except in pursuance of specific appropriations made by law. Appropriations were not to be made for a longer term than two years.⁴¹ The General Assembly was restrained from contracting any debt or liability except for the purpose of suppressing insurrection or repelling invasion.⁴² It was further prohibited to pass any local or special law covering twenty-one carefully enumerated subjects.⁴³ The power of the assembly to tax property was limited to six mills on the dollar.⁴⁴

³³ *Clinton Patriot-Democrat*, quoted in *ibid.*, May 8, 1879.

³⁴ *Vienna Sentinel*, quoted in *ibid.*, May 10, 1879.

³⁵ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, July 1, 1879.

³⁶ *New Orleans Times*, July 2, 1879. *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, July 2, 1879, gives the result as 83 ayes to 25 nays.

³⁷ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, July 24, 1879.

³⁸ *Constitution of the State of Louisiana Adopted in Convention, At the City of New Orleans, the Twenty-third Day of July, A.D. 1879* (New Orleans, 1879), Art. 12, p. 4.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Art. 29, p. 10.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Art. 22, p. 9.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Art. 43, p. 12.

⁴² *Ibid.*, Art. 44, p. 12.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, Art. 46, pp. 13-14.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Art. 209, pp. 50-51.

Every male citizen of the United States, 21 years of age or over, who was an actual resident of the state one year and of the parish six months was declared to be qualified to vote⁴⁵ unless disqualified by reason of being convicted of treason, embezzlement, malfeasance in office, larceny, bribery, or illegal voting; and excluding idiots and insane persons.⁴⁶ The Constitution emphatically declared that "no qualification of any kind for suffrage or office nor any restraint upon the same on account of race, color, or previous condition shall be made by law."⁴⁷

The approaching election was considered a very important one, for not only were the people to accept or reject the new Constitution, the debt ordinance and locate the capital, but they were also to elect a Governor, other state officials, and members of the General Assembly. For the first time since the war they were to have their own affairs completely in their own hands.⁴⁸ The campaign was to be exclusively and essentially local, there being no national issues to be settled or federal officers to be elected.

The Democrats apparently were harmonious and confident of victory when suddenly there appeared in every ward in New Orleans a political organization designed to reorganize completely the Democratic ward clubs prior to the opening of the campaign. There appeared to be no very great differences in opinion concerning the gubernatorial candidates, but it was insisted that if a well-organized political ring was to control the nomination and virtually the election of all important officers, it would render the campaign a mere farce and no one could afford to be enthusiastic about it.⁴⁹ A new organization, the Anti-Ring Democratic Association, was formed to take part in the approaching campaign. The members declared that they were prepared and willing to compare records with the chiefs of the Ring and were determined to prevent a repetition of the election of 1879 in which the popular will had been ignored and candidates proclaimed elected who had been notoriously defeated.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Art. 185, p. 45.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Art. 187, pp. 45-46.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Art. 188, p. 46.

⁴⁸ *New Orleans Times*, August 24, 1879.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, August 21, 1879.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, August 24, 1879.

The Anti-Ring Association declared its only purpose was to insure fair play at the elections⁵¹ and its intention was to devote its chief work to parish politics (Orleans Parish).⁵² It opposed all rings and cliques by which the party in the past had been corruptly used for the promotion of individual interests regardless of public welfare, and it favored the selection of honest, capable and deserving citizens to fill state and city offices, and the economical administration of the government.⁵³

After a thorough examination of the rules adopted by the Democratic Parish Committee for the conduct of the primary elections the Association discovered some defects which they believed would make a fair election impossible, and the result a repetition of frauds, box stuffing and fraudulent counting. They prepared a number of amendments, modifications and additions, and submitted them to the Parish Committee. The changes suggested were as follows:

1. Judges of election appointed by presidents of ward clubs to be dispensed with.

2. Challenged votes to be received under protest at the polls with the name of the voter, his age and residence, and the name of the challenging party and his residence on the back of the ballot. Challenged ballots to be counted separately and if they affect election results, they shall be remitted to parish committee for settlement.

3. All tickets must be printed on white paper three inches wide without distinguishing marks and to be stamped on the back by the commissioners representing the different factions before being deposited.⁵⁴

The rules were presented by President H. J. Rivet of the Anti-Ring Association to President B. S. Shields of the regular Democratic Parish Committee. The Committee amended the rules before adopting them.⁵⁵

The Anti-Ring Association and the Conservative Association decided that a fair and honest election would be impossible under the amended rules, so they made preparations to hold a separate election on October 2 for delegates to the Baton Rouge State

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, September 25, 1879.

⁵² *Ibid.*, October 2, 1879.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, September 2, 1879.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, September 7, 1879; *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, September 7, 1879.

⁵⁵ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, September 14, 1879.

Convention, presidents of central clubs and members of the Parish Committee. In order not to be misunderstood they issued a lengthy address to the voters of the parish, in which they explained why they had determined on independent action.⁵⁶

The Citizens' Democratic Association requested the Anti-Ring Association to appoint a conference committee to consider joint adoption of some rules. The following were adopted:

1. But two factions in any ward can be recognized or have representation in primary elections.

2. The poll lists upon which the primary election is conducted must be a certified copy of the registration list of the ward in which the voting takes place.

3. Factions have the exclusive right to appoint their own commissioners.

4. All registered voters excepting those known to be Republican shall be allowed to vote.

5. No judges shall be appointed. But in case of a deadlock, candidates may choose an umpire, whose decision shall be final.

6. All ballots shall be printed upon white paper, of uniform size and with no device on the back.

7. Each faction shall furnish its commissioners with a stamp, and tickets which do not contain on the back the stamp of both factions shall not be counted.⁵⁷

Upon the request of the Citizens' Democratic Association, the Democratic Parish Association appointed a rules conference committee.⁵⁸ As a result rules were agreed upon which were acceptable to all three factions and every misunderstanding which had existed between them was settled. The Democracy in Orleans Parish was again united, much to the relief of the rest of the state.⁵⁹ Thus the Citizens' Democratic Association in alliance with the Anti-Ring Association secured concessions from the Democratic Parish Committee which the Anti-Ringers had been powerless to obtain.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, September 18, 1879; *New Orleans Times*, September 18, 1879.

⁵⁷ *New Orleans Times*, September 22, 1879.

⁵⁸ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, September 24, 1879.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, September 26, 1879; *New Orleans Times*, September 26, 1879.

⁶⁰ *New Orleans Times*, September 25, 1879.

The election of delegates to the State Convention was very exciting due to the popularity and recognized worth of both candidates, L. A. Wiltz and Fred Ogden. Friends of the candidates worked faithfully and enthusiastically to further the interests of their favorites.

The State Democratic Convention met in Baton Rouge on October 7. The house was organized with F. P. Poche, chairman, and F. Armant, secretary. There were contesting delegations from the parishes of Plaquemines and St. Bernard. The report of the Committee on Credentials, seating the Kernochan delegates from Plaquemines and the Estopinal delegates from St. Bernard, was accepted.⁶¹

Colonel W. M. Levy nominated L. A. Wiltz for governor and Don Caffery nominated Fred N. Ogden. Wiltz was nominated on the first ballot by a vote of 274 to 173½.⁶² The rest of the ticket was as follows:

Lieutenant-Governor.....	S. D. McEnery
Attorney General.....	J. C. Egan
Secretary of State.....	W. A. Strong
Auditor.....	Allen Jumel
Superintendent of Public Education..	E. H. Fay ⁶³

The platform adopted by the convention consisted of eight resolutions. It guaranteed equal rights to all citizens and pledged the party to promote reforms in every department of the state government; pledged a liberal system of public schools for the education of all classes and races; to protect the rights of the state; to enforce proper subordination of military power to civil authority; and to protect the purity of elections. It recommended the improvement of the Mississippi River and levee building; approved of the new Constitution; denounced the election of Hayes and Wheeler as fraudulent, and demanded the seating of H. M. Spofford. The Representatives in Congress were praised for their efforts to repeal obnoxious legislation, and the administration of Governor Francis T. Nicholls was endorsed.⁶⁴

⁶¹ *New Orleans Democrat*, October 8, 1879.

⁶² *Ibid.* East Feliciana cast her nine votes for T. B. Lyons.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, October 9, 1879.

⁶⁴ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, October 9, 1879.

The overthrow of the Republican government in 1877 had broken up the entire Republican organization, and although the party had been represented in the Constitutional Convention and in the Legislature, as an organization it had taken no part in the elections of 1878 and 1879. The old State Central Committee was all that remained of the former party organization.⁶⁵

In pursuance to a call from Chairman A. J. Dumont, the Republican State Central Committee met in Turners' Hall in New Orleans on August 26. There were sixty members present. A state convention was called to meet in New Orleans on October 20. The main objects of the deliberations of the convention were thus set forth: "The reorganization of the Republican party in Louisiana upon the basis of its national principles, the consideration of the acceptance or rejection of the new constitution and of the debt ordinance, the question of the exodus to Kansas and other western and northwestern states, and the creation of a new State Central Committee to lead the campaign of this and next year."⁶⁶

The Republican State Convention met in the Globe Theater in New Orleans on October 20. Suspended above the stage were pieces of colored bunting bearing the names "California," "Maine," "Colorado," "Ohio," and "Iowa." The pennants were doubtless placed there to chronicle the fact that the Republicans had recently scored victories in those states.⁶⁷ There were three hundred delegates and spectators present, of which three-fourths were colored.⁶⁸

The Convention was organized with Henry Demas as temporary chairman. There were contesting delegations from Madison, Orleans, St. Martin, and St. Mary parishes. The report of the committee on credentials, recommending the seating of the Pinchback delegation from Madison, the Lewis delegation from the Fourth Ward of Orleans, the Blondin delegation from the Second Ward, and all the contestants from the Sixth Ward on half votes each, the Smallwood delegation from the Ninth Ward, the Jordan delegation from the Seventeenth Ward, and the Detiege delegation from St. Martin and both delegations from St. Mary on half votes, was accepted.

⁶⁵ *German Gazette*, quoted in *New Orleans Democrat*, October 12, 1879.

⁶⁶ *New Orleans Times*, August 27, 1879; *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, August 27, 1879; *New Orleans Democrat*, October 12, 1879.

⁶⁷ *New Orleans Democrat*, October 21, 1879; *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, October 21, 1879.

⁶⁸ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, October 21, 1879.

The report of the Committee on Permanent Organization, advising the selection of A. J. Dumont as permanent chairman and W. H. Vigers as secretary, was a signal for the fray between the Grant men and the Sherman or Costum-House faction. The adoption of the report would place the Shermanites in control of the permanent organization and give them the privilege of appointing twenty members of the Central Committee. To the dismay of the Grant men, the report was adopted.⁶⁹

Taylor Beattie was the unanimous choice for governor.⁷⁰ It was thought that he would have an excellent chance to win because he was not only a leader in the Republican Party but was highly esteemed and respected by Republicans and Democrats alike. The remainder of the ticket was as follows:

Lieutenant-Governor	James N. Gillespie
Attorney General.....	Don A. Pardee
Secretary of State.....	James D. Kennedy
Auditor	Claudius Mayo
Superintendent of Public Education..	M. F. Bonzano ⁷¹

The platform favored improving rivers and harbors, providing a southern transit to the Pacific coast, encouraging foreign commerce, and attempting to pay the state debt represented by consolidated bonds issued under the constitutional amendment of 1874. It opposed the debt ordinance but refused to declare for or against the Constitution.⁷²

An attempt was made to place the convention on record as favoring the nomination of Grant for the presidency. T. T. Allain introduced the following resolution:

Resolved, That we as Republicans of the State of Louisiana, welcome back to the shores of America the champion of our Union, the protector of our Nation, and the hero of the great rebellion, Ulysses S. Grant; that, having faith in his integrity and ability, we hereby declare him to be our unalterable choice for the President of the United States in 1880.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*; *New Orleans Democrat*, October 21, 1879.

⁷⁰ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, October 21, 1879.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, October 22, 1879. The only colored man on the ticket was Kennedy. Gillespie at first refused to run but was later persuaded to remain on the ticket.

⁷² *New Orleans Democrat*, October 22, 1879. There were two factions in the Republican Party, those who favored the new Constitution and those who opposed it. Consequently, the party was unable to make any declaration regarding the document.

The resolution was greeted with the wildest enthusiasm by the convention.⁷³ It was referred to the Committee on Resolutions which endorsed it. However, the report was never laid before the convention despite Allain's earnest efforts, because the Sherman men controlled the organization.⁷⁴

Although the Radicals to all appearances were disorganized and powerless, the *Times* said the party was "not so utterly defunct as to be entirely harmless" and that it was of first importance that the old foe should be given no opportunity for any hope of revival.⁷⁵

The Temperance Alliance, a new minor party, held a convention in New Orleans on November 14, and nominated the following ticket:

Governor	Daniel Dennett
Lieutenant-Governor	Thomas Overton
Secretary of State.....	J. L. Mays
Auditor	H. S. Bell
Superintendent of Public Education.....	Robert M. Lusher
Attorney General.....	R. J. Bowman

They adopted a platform favoring the establishment of a State Bureau of Agriculture and Immigration, well-guarded exemption from taxation for five years of all new manufactures and cultivators of the soil, the passage of a Sunday law suppressing all sales of intoxicating liquors on Sunday, the abolition of all state and city port charges, and all legislation which would protect all citizens whether white or black in their civil, political and legal rights and frowning upon all unjust oppression coming from any quarter.⁷⁶

The Mechanics' and Laborers' Union held a convention on November 28 and adopted an address to the voters of the state urging the adoption of the Constitution, endorsing the straight Democratic ticket and urging others to do likewise.⁷⁷

⁷³ New Orleans Daily Picayune, October 21, 1879.

⁷⁴ Ibid., October 22, 1879.

⁷⁵ New Orleans Times, October 9, 1879.

⁷⁶ New Orleans Daily Picayune, November 15, 1879.

⁷⁷ New Orleans Times, November 29, 1879.

The Union Soldiers' Association issued an address to their Republican comrades urging them to abstain from voting.⁷⁸ The trouble was they were dissatisfied because they wanted more patronage than they were getting.

In Orleans Parish the Anti-Ring Association sprang into life again. They were dissatisfied with the rules which were to govern the election. Careful observers of the political situation had grave fears that the parish fight might have an injurious effect on the success of the state ticket.⁷⁹ Although the Association adopted resolutions endorsing the nominations made by the Democratic State Convention,⁸⁰ there was uneasiness in the Democratic camp. The breach between the two fractions in Orleans Parish was further widened when the "Anti-Ringers" adopted resolutions urging all its members and friends to refrain from participating in the parish primary election because of the belief that the Ring had already agreed upon the candidates, thus making any election a "vain empty formality." It also declared that the Association had no desire to divide, detract, or impair the usefulness of the Democratic Party, but that it was forced to order a separate parochial ticket by the refusal of the Democratic Ring to insure a fair and impartial election.⁸¹

The Anti-Ring Convention which was held on November 11, 1879,⁸² nominated a parish ticket⁸³ and candidates for senator in the first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth districts and for representative in the second, third, sixth, seventh, twelfth, thirteenth and fifteenth districts.⁸⁴

The Democratic campaign was formally inaugurated in Lafayette Square, New Orleans, October 18, by a large mass meeting of approximately four thousand voters which gave an enthusiastic expression of their satisfaction with the action and choice of the State Convention. The rally was addressed by the candidates and leaders.

Immediately after the meeting the nominees with a large corps of able speakers left on an extended tour of the state.⁸⁵

⁷⁸ *New Orleans Democrat*, December 13, 1879.

⁷⁹ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, October 14, 1879.

⁸⁰ *New Orleans Times*, October 23, 1879.

⁸¹ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, October 30, 1879.

⁸² *Ibid.*, November 11, 1879.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, November 13, 1879.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, November 12, 1879.

⁸⁵ *New Orleans Democrat*, October 19, 1879.

Their course was carefully mapped out by the State Central Committee which planned fifty-two mass meetings in as many towns and cities. In addition, countless mass meetings and barbecues were promoted by local politicians.⁸⁶

The Republicans also made an extended canvass of the state. The Democratic newspapers took keen delight in chronicling the progress of the two groups and in praising the Wiltz meetings and belittling the Beattie meetings. The Democratic rallies were always acclaimed as being large and enthusiastic and the Republican rallies described as being small and feeble and composed of mostly Negroes. In the middle of November Wiltz became ill and was forced to abandon the canvass, but the other nominees and their assistants continued.⁸⁷

The election which was held on December 2 progressed quietly. There was very little, if any, disturbance at the polls.⁸⁸

Wiltz won by a majority of 30,751. The total vote was Wiltz 72,610, and Beattie 41,859.⁸⁹ The Constitution was ratified by a vote of 86,494 to 27,346,⁹⁰ and the debt ordinance adopted by a vote of 59,932 to 49,445.⁹¹

In New Orleans the Temperance Alliance reported that their tickets placed at the polls were destroyed.⁹² At several of the polls the Republican and Anti-Ring tickets disappeared and only Democratic tickets were to be had. However, as far as could be ascertained, there seemed to be no evidence of fraud on the part of the Democrats.⁹³ Governor Wiltz said of the election:

Polls were open at every precinct throughout the State. No legal voter was denied his franchise. Both parties were represented at the polls. Colored men in large numbers voted for Democratic candidates. The canvass was pacific, the poll fair, the returns honest and the result eminently satisfactory to all real friends of the state. In fact the era of fraud in Louisiana ceased with the fraudulent regime of Radical usurpation.⁹⁴

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, October 18, 1879.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, November 14, 15, 1879.

⁸⁸ *New Orleans Times*, December 3, 1879.

⁸⁹ *New Orleans Democrat*, December 12, 1879.

⁹⁰ *House Miscellaneous Documents*, 46 Cong., 2 Sess., I, No. 12, pp. 79-80.

⁹¹ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, January 1, 1880.

⁹² *New Orleans Times*, December 7, 1879.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, December 3, 1879.

⁹⁴ Letter of Governor Louis A. Wiltz to Charles Weckerling, in *Cleveland (Ohio) Plaindealer*, quoted in *New Orleans Democrat*, September 24, 1880.

The Democrats were now in control of the state and could turn their full attention to the approaching national election. The backbone of Republican resistance was broken. They could feel assured that Louisiana's electoral votes, if cast for the Democratic candidates, would go to them.

CHAPTER V

THE ELECTION OF 1880 IN LOUISIANA

The outcome of the presidential campaign of 1876 had called national attention to possible abuses through use of United States troops in connection with state elections. In the third session of the Forty-fifth Congress it was determined to take final steps in repealing the obnoxious statute which permitted the use of troops to preserve order at the polls.¹

In Louisiana the Democrats were angry over the so-called persecution of party members in the courts on charges of fraud and bulldozing in the election of 1878. The Louisiana General Assembly passed protesting resolutions which declared that "sections 5506, 5507 and 5509 of the Revised Statutes of the United States are in derogation of the Constitution of the United States, and of the amendments thereof, in this that the Federal Government by these sections assume plenary jurisdiction of the matter of suffrage without reference to the action of the states as such and without interference on their part to deny or abridge the right of suffrage as directed in the said constitutional amendment."²

Democrats were generally of the opinion that unless the despised election laws were repealed the next House would not be organized as a Democratic body. Southern members were unanimous in the determination to vote against all appropriation bills until the objectionable measures were repealed.³

On January 20, M. J. Durham introduced a bill to repeal all laws in regard to the appointment and pay of supervisors of election and special marshals to aid them. It was referred to the

¹ Edward Mayo, *Lucius Q. C. Lamar, His Life, Times, and Speeches* (Nashville, 1896), 377.

² *Louisiana Acts*, 1879, p. 38.

³ *New Orleans Times*, February 14, 1879.

Committee on Expenditures in the Department of Justice.⁴ The Committee submitted a report which was ordered printed and recommitted.⁵

The Army Appropriation Bill was introduced by A. S. Hewitt, January 23, 1879.⁶ On February 6, an amendment was offered to revise section 2002 of the Revised Statutes so as to read as follows:

No military or navy officer, or other person engaged in the civil, military, or naval service of the United States, shall order, bring, keep or have under his authority or control any troops or armed men at the place where any general or special election is held in any state, unless it be necessary to repel the armed enemies of the United States.⁷

The amendment was carried by 110 ayes to 95 nays⁸ in the House and accepted with numerous amendments in the Senate by 34 ayes and 33 nays.⁹ The House refused to concur,¹⁰ so a Committee of Conference was appointed.¹¹ There were three conferences, but no agreement could be reached.¹²

A caucus of 59 Representatives and 10 Senators was held on February 9. A committee was appointed to work out an amendment repealing the test oath and the clauses which provided for the appointment of Federal supervisors of elections.¹³ On February 10, V. H. Manning introduced a bill repealing sections 820-821 and 2011-2031, inclusive, and all other sections of the *Revised Statutes* authorizing the appointment and payment of supervisors of elections and special deputies. This bill was intended to abolish the hated test oath which jurors were forced to take before they could serve, namely, that they had not taken up arms or joined in any insurrection or rebellion against the United States or given it any direct or indirect aid in money, arms, horses, clothes, etc., or resisted the execution of any federal laws; and to abolish supervisors of election. A motion to suspend the rules to pass it failed for lack of a two-thirds vote in favor of it.¹⁴

⁴ *Congressional Record*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., VIII, Pt. I, 577.

⁵ *Ibid.*, VIII, Pt. III, 2002.

⁶ *Ibid.*, VIII, Pt. I, 689.

⁷ *Ibid.*, VIII, Pt. II, 1065.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 1143-1144.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 1818-1825.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, VIII, Pt. III, 1909.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 1934.

¹² *Ibid.*, 2283, 2339, 2379-2384.

¹³ *New Orleans Times*, February 9, 1879.

¹⁴ *Congressional Record*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., VIII, Pt. II, 1163-1165.

The Democrats were determined not to yield an inch and were willing for the president to try the experiment of running the government without money if he wanted to.¹⁵ However, such was not his intention. When Congress adjourned on March 4 without passing the appropriation bills, he called an extra session.¹⁶

On March 22, W. A. Sparks introduced a bill which was essentially the same as the one which had passed the House, with the clauses relative to the reorganization of the Army stricken out.¹⁷ The bill passed the House on April 5 by a vote of 148 yeas to 122 nays.¹⁸ It was passed in the Senate with amendments by 41 yeas to 30 nays.¹⁹

The President promptly vetoed the bill.²⁰ In his message he said that the portion dealing with the appropriations had his approval but the other legislation attached to it did not. He emphasized the fact that the part dealing with sections 2002 and 5528 of the *Revised Statutes* was unnecessary because laws already in force were adequate to prevent military interference at the polls. He further stated that if it were adopted it would deprive the civil authorities of the United States of all power to keep peace at the Congressional elections.²¹ The House failed to pass the bill over the President's veto by a vote of 120 yeas and 110 nays.²²

The Democrats decided to offer a separate bill to prohibit military interference at elections and, if it was vetoed, to make it again part of the appropriation bills.²³ On May 5, G. W. Ladd introduced a bill²⁴ into the House making it unlawful to use military or naval forces at any place an election was being held except to repel armed enemies of the United States or to enforce Section Four of Article Four of the Constitution.²⁵ The bill passed the House by a vote of 125 yeas to 90 nays.²⁶ The Senate accepted it by a vote of 33 yeas to 23 nays.²⁷ Presi-

¹⁵ *New Orleans Times*, March 13, 1879.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, March 5, 1879.

¹⁷ *Congressional Record*, 46 Cong., 1 Sess., IX, Pt. I, 82.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 270.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 913.

²⁰ *New Orleans Times*, April 30, 1879.

²¹ *Ibid.*; *Congressional Record*, 46 Cong., 1 Sess., IX, Pt. I, 993-995.

²² *Congressional Record*, 46 Cong., 1 Sess., IX, Pt. I, 1014-1015.

²³ *New Orleans Times*, May 8, 1879.

²⁴ *Congressional Record*, 46 Cong., 1 Sess., IX, Pt. I, 1049.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 1092.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 1094-1095.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1189.

dent Hays vetoed this bill because he believed it discriminated in favor of the State and against National authority.²⁸ The bill was lost by a vote of 128 yeas to 97 nays in the House.²⁹

The *New Orleans Times* denounced the President and his veto. It said:

Divested of all rhetoric the fact is, simply, that the Republican party is determined to retain control of the machinery of elections in view of the campaign of 1880 now close at hand.³⁰ . . . Mr. Hayes has served notice on the country that his party means to carry the next election even by force if necessary. A party is like a man. It must have some pluck. The Democratic party started out with a bluff. The Republicans 'called' us. Now what shall we do? To stop is to acknowledge our defeat, and say to the country that we dare not carry out the threats we have made.³¹

A remarkable change took place in the tone of the Democrats. They realized that the failure to make appropriations would hurt the Democratic Party and help Hayes.³² They decided to pass the appropriation bill without the objectionable amendments but to specify that none of the money was to be used to equip, transport or pay any portion of the Army to be used as a police force at any election.³³ The amendment was lost in the Senate³⁴ and the bill passed without any of the objectionable features on June 20, 1879.³⁵

The Democrats attempted to prevent military interference at the polls by passing a separate bill making appropriations for fees and pay of United States marshals subject to the same restrictions that had caused the appropriation bills to be vetoed.³⁶ The President vetoed this bill,³⁷ and Congress adjourned without making any provision for paying the marshals. Hayes' refusal to call an extra session caused a serious breach between the President and the extreme Republicans because the marshals

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1267-1268.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, IX, Pt. II, 1298.

³⁰ *New Orleans Times*, May 13, 1879.

³¹ *Ibid.*, May 29, 1879.

³² *Ibid.*, May 25, 1879.

³³ *Congressional Record*, 46 Cong., 1 Sess., IX, Pt. II, 2204.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 2226.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 2243.

³⁶ *New Orleans Times*, July 1, 1879.

³⁷ *Congressional Record*, 46 Cong., 1 Sess., IX, Pt. II, 2445.

could not do their duty without pay. He and Sherman were denounced for "Retreating before the Rebel Fire."³⁸ The Democrats had found a way to circumvent the veto.³⁹

The test oath was not repealed despite the earnest efforts of the Louisiana delegation.⁴⁰ However, the oath was practically nullified by a decision of the Supreme Court that the oath was unconstitutional and that a juror could not be required to answer the questions contained in it. Justice Strong was the only judge dissenting. This satisfied the Democrats, who thought that any further legislation was unnecessary.⁴¹

The New Orleans *Picayune* said of the struggle:

The fact which we wish to bring to light is that the real fight in the extra session has been between the Republicans. The Democrats have only furnished an occasion for the split, and it occurred. After the adjournment of the National Republican Convention, the breach will probably be healed; but a solidly Democratic South and a partially Democratic North, relieved from the coercion of arms, and the jugglery of returning boards and deputy marshals will carry the day and seat a President who will not be the creation of an electoral commission.⁴²

In May, 1880, J. T. Morgan introduced into the Senate a bill to regulate the counting of the electoral vote. It provided that objections to a list from a state should be considered by both houses and if the two did not concur in rejecting it, it should be accepted. If two or more lists were submitted, if the two houses did not concur in receiving one of them, all should be rejected.⁴³ The bill was opposed by the Republicans, who succeeded in having it indefinitely postponed⁴⁴ by filibustering every time it was mentioned.⁴⁵

The Democrats in Louisiana felt that they had been unjustly treated when Kellogg was not expelled and Spofford admitted to the Senate. In 1879 they entered upon a vigorous campaign to unseat him. The Democratic members of the House held a caucus and unanimously agreed to memorialize Congress

³⁸ *New Orleans Times*, July 2, 4, 1879.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, May 21, 30, June 22, 26, July 1, 1879.

⁴⁰ *New Orleans Democrat*, June 18, 1879.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, May 1, 1879.

⁴² *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, June 30, 1879.

⁴³ *New Orleans Democrat*, May 14, 1880.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, May 25, 1880.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, June 13, 1880.

to unseat Kellogg.⁴⁶ The Republican members of the Legislature also sent a memorial to the Senate in which they said that, had it not been for fraud and oppression in the election of 1879, they would have been able to address the Senate officially as the Legislature of Louisiana and not as the powerless minority representing a hundred thousand disenfranchised voters. They stated: "It is perhaps but logical that men whose occupation of a majority of seats in the legislature is solely due to dishonest and undemocratic practices should submit a memorial in behalf of a senatorial claimant whose title is as barren as many of their own."

The Democratic members of the Senate met in caucus to discuss the charges which the Republicans had made against them and the charges of contempt to which they had rendered themselves liable.⁴⁷ The offending Senators were declared to be in contempt and were suspended from participation in the Senate proceedings until they had expurged themselves.⁴⁸

The National Senate Committee on Elections decided to report that Kellogg was not entitled to the seat and to recommend the seating of Spofford.⁴⁹ Most of the Democratic Senators favored ousting Kellogg,⁵⁰ but some believed that since the Senate had seated Kellogg it had no right to reverse its decision even though Spofford was being unjustly treated.⁵¹ The *Democrat* was indignant and said, "Justice to Louisiana is being defeated by the votes of Bayard, Hampton and Butler and a few other Democratic Senators."⁵²

During the litigation Spofford died.⁵³ This naturally prejudiced the Senate in favor of retaining Kellogg. Louisiana Democrats were not willing to drop the case, however, and Governor Wiltz appointed T. C. Manning to succeed Spofford.⁵⁴ Manning went to Washington to press his claims.⁵⁵ The *Democrat* said, "If the usurper retains his seat it will not be because of any lack of protest on the part of the people and the press of Louisiana."⁵⁶

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, January 31, 1880.

⁴⁷ *New Orleans Times*, February 24, 1880.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, February 27, 1880.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, March 18, 1880; *New Orleans Democrat*, April 2, 1880.

⁵⁰ *New Orleans Democrat*, May 12, 13, 19, 21, 1880.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, May 14, 20, 1880; *New Orleans Times*, May 8, 1880.

⁵² *New Orleans Democrat*, March 17, 1880.

⁵³ *Louisiana Capitolian*, November 20, 1880.

⁵⁴ *New Orleans Democrat*, November 17, 1880.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, December 5, 1880.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, August 25, 1880.

After the election of 1880, the Democrats were in the minority in the Senate and therefore were unable to oust Kellogg and seat Manning.⁵⁷

The main reason why Kellogg was not ousted was that the seating of Spofford would have been a virtual admission that the electoral vote of Louisiana should have been cast for Tilden. That would have made him an entirely too prominent candidate for the presidency before the National Democratic Convention, and the Senate, being abundantly supplied with other presidential aspirants, was not disposed to take any chances.⁵⁸

Louisiana herself was extremely opposed to the nomination of Tilden. The *Houma Courier* was convinced that the nomination of Tilden would not tend to harmonize the party in New York and that the result would certainly be disastrous.⁵⁹ The *Morehouse Clarion* said it was opposed to "wishy washy Tilden."⁶⁰ The *New Orleans Democrat* said: "Mr. Tilden is not the choice of the Louisiana Democracy, and it is our candid opinion, based upon a careful review of the situation, that his candidacy at Cincinnati would not be hailed with enthusiasm or even with satisfaction in the South."⁶¹ Furthermore, "Of all the prominent men in the Democratic party, North, East, South and West, Tilden is the most obnoxious and unpopular, and there is no one who could not command a larger popular vote. Tilden is as dead as last year's pickled mackerel."⁶² The *New Orleans Times* said, "We object to the candidacy of Samuel J. Tilden because he is neither a great man or a good man." He is not above suspicion and "the president of the American Nation should be above suspicion."⁶³ "The men who are now conspiring to foist Tilden upon the party will be quietly but firmly told that the section from which the votes come desires to be heard, and will be heard. The South will demand no candidate of its own selection, either from the South or from the North, but Southern leaders will not consent to the nomination of an enemy to the South and her interests."⁶⁴ It was

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, March 17, 1881.

⁵⁸ *New Orleans Times*, May 9, 1880.

⁵⁹ *Houma Courier*, quoted in *New Orleans Democrat*, April 7, 1880.

⁶⁰ *Morehouse Clarion*, quoted in *ibid.*, April 7, 1880.

⁶¹ *New Orleans Democrat*, April 9, 1880.

⁶² *Ibid.*, December 10, 1878.

⁶³ *New Orleans Times*, May 11, 1879.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, May 22, 1879.

evident that Tilden was not regarded as a desirable or available candidate in Louisiana or the South, but if the National Convention should nominate him they had no intention of deserting him.⁶⁵

E. John Ellis, Representative from the Second Congressional District, said that in his opinion the nomination of Tilden would virtually disband the Democratic Party in Louisiana. He predicted that it would lose the Democrats two if not three Congressional districts. He asserted that the people were impressed with the belief that Mr. Tilden's course with regard to the electoral count and the contest in 1876 was cowardly and vacillating. Furthermore, the suits against him for his internal revenue tax, the cipher dispatches and his railroad wrecking and speculating exploits had rendered him unfit.⁶⁶

The Tilden movement received a decided setback when Cincinnati was selected for the National Convention. It was believed he could be nominated in Chicago but not in the Ohio city.⁶⁷

General Winfield Scott Hancock was the choice of the Louisiana Democracy. The "Hancock boom" was inaugurated at an informal meeting of the admirers of the General held in New Orleans on March 13 for the purpose of placing his claims before the public. John McEnery presided. After a desultory discussion it was decided to inaugurate measures for the establishment of Hancock clubs throughout the State, and to this end a committee was appointed to prepare for the proposed organization.⁶⁸

On March 17, a grand rally, attended by a huge crowd, was held at the statehouse with McEnery presiding. On motion of Thomas Handy the chairman was authorized to appoint a committee of seventeen, one from each ward in New Orleans, to organize clubs in the city, and an executive committee of eighteen to be selected from the Congressional districts to organize the movement throughout the State. A long address favoring the candidacy of General Hancock was issued and Louisiana papers were requested to copy it.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ *New Orleans Democrat*, February 27, 1880.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, April 10, 1880.

⁶⁷ *New Orleans Times*, February 24, 1880.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, March 15, 1880.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, March 18, 1880; *New Orleans Democrat*, March 18, 1880; *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, March 18, 1880.

The movement to further Hancock's claims was enthusiastically received throughout the state. The *Opelousas Courier* said: "We notice with pleasure the movement on foot in New Orleans in favor of General Winfield Scott Hancock for the presidency. In 1871 and again in 1876, we published articles in favor of the distinguished gentleman for the great office of president. To-day, we are more than ever convinced that he would be the wisest choice the Democracy could make."⁷⁰ The Ouachita Parish Convention adopted the following resolutions:

We commend to the support of our brother Democrats throughout the state Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock, of Pennsylvania, a gallant soldier in the war and a statesman in peace, who asserted the rightful supremacy of the civil over the military authority.

We express the hope that the state convention of the 12th proximo will direct our national delegates to support Gen. Hancock, as a recognition of his eminent ability and as an expression of Louisiana's gratitude for his efforts as a military commander of this district to give her citizens the rights to which they were entitled under the Constitution.⁷¹

Secretary Sherman openly and ardently sought the nomination. He used his secretaryship to fill the customhouses, especially in the South, with his own partisans, looking to their probable attendance in the Republican Convention.⁷² In Louisiana this was especially true. In February Sherman undertook to remove James Lewis, the naval officer, because he was a Grant man.⁷³ The notorious Pinchback's name was sent in for the place.⁷⁴ The President decided that the removal so close to the election of delegates to Chicago might create an irreconcilable feud among the Louisiana Republicans.⁷⁵ This angered Pinchback and his colored supporters, who declared they were going to work in the interest of Grant's nomination.⁷⁶

Grant was by far the most popular Republican candidate in Louisiana. It was a well-known fact that in the parishes

⁷⁰ *Opelousas Courier*, March 20, 1880.

⁷¹ *New Orleans Times*, April 3, 1880.

⁷² *Ibid.*, August 5, 1879, February 28, 1880; *New Orleans Democrat*, February 13, 1880.

⁷³ *New Orleans Times*, February 12, 1880.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, February 28, 1880; *New Orleans Democrat*, February 28, 1880.

⁷⁵ *New Orleans Times*, February 12, 1880.

⁷⁶ *New Orleans Democrat*, February 13, 1880.

sentiment was almost wholly in his favor. The Sherman faction realized this, so the Custom House Party took care of the delegates to the convention and placed many of them on the granite building payroll. Furthermore, the Custom House roll of country delegates was not in accordance with the returns. It contained enough delegates who would obey the Sherman faction to control the temporary organization. It was predicted that the faction controlling the temporary organization would name the candidate. The outcome depended upon which delegations the Committee on Credentials seated.⁷⁷

The Grant faction realized that they could not expect much from the State Central Committee which was controlled by Shermanites, so they went to work organizing clubs and undertook to secure an endorsement of Grant by the Colored Men's Protective Association.⁷⁸

There was some opposition to a third term for Grant. G. W. Geddes of Ohio attempted to introduce a resolution condemning the third term in the national House of Representatives but was thwarted by radical filibustering.⁷⁹ In Louisiana there seemed to be little opposition to a third term.

A number of prominent men in New Orleans wrote to Grant, who had just returned from a trip around the world, urging him to visit their city.⁸⁰ The City Council passed resolutions extending an invitation.⁸¹ At first Grant declined, saying he would either return by way of California or through Mexico.⁸² Later he changed his mind and accepted the invitation.⁸³

Grant arrived on March 31. Irrespective of party prejudices, race, and color, the people of the city turned out to welcome him. The Grant faction were enthusiastic over his cordial reception by all classes.⁸⁴

In regard to the reception the *Louisiana Capitolian* said: "We don't want Mr. Grant for President; consequently we are opposed to the method of assisting him in his electioneering tour by placarding him before the public in the same manner that it is

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, May 22, 23, 1880; *New Orleans Times*, May 20, 1880.

⁷⁸ *New Orleans Democrat*, March 26, 1880.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, May 11, 1880.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, March 9, 1880.

⁸¹ *New Orleans Times*, February 8, 1880.

⁸² *Ibid.*, February 22, 1880.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, March 24, 1880.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, April 1, 8, 1880.

done for the ringmaster of a circus when he rides at the head of the acrobats in procession so that the crowd gulled by the 'big show' on the street, may be induced to turn out in large numbers at the performance."⁸⁵ The *New Orleans Picayune* said:

The public reception given to ex-Pres. Grant, in this city, was a graceful recognition of the part which he played in public affairs, and a proper tribute of respect to one who has twice held the high position of President of the United States. In this sense General Grant will understand it. In this sense he will appreciate it. He has too much intelligence to suppose that the testimony of respect for the high position which he held, is to be confused with a political demonstration. . . . When our politics are freed from the influence of prejudices, and passions and resentments we shall become once more a united people, proud of our common country and our common Government.⁸⁶

The *Houma Courier* said:

From the manner in which Grant was received by the banditti of New Orleans, one would be led to suppose that the ex-president was considered as a second class god by the very people he caused to suffer so many deep and lasting humiliations. We are willing to admit that Grant should have been treated with that courtesy due a gentleman—but no more. Grant, after all, is but a citizen today, though prospectively the Republican candidate to succeed the 8 to 7 fraud.⁸⁷

The Democrats favored Grant because they thought they could beat him easier than most any other candidate which the Republicans might select. They believed that only a "most magnificent and overpowering blunder" would elect him.⁸⁸ The *Opelousas Courier* asked, "What do our readers think of Hayesism compared to Grantism? We would prefer Grant because, then we would know what to expect. Grant is an open enemy. Hayes lies in ambush."⁸⁹

The *New Orleans Times* preferred Hayes. It said: "Next to a good Democratic president we think we would rather have Hayes, for mere padding to an official chair is far better than a bold and aggressive enemy."⁹⁰

⁸⁵ *Louisiana Capitolian*, April 10, 1880.

⁸⁶ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, April 2, 1880.

⁸⁷ *Houma Courier*, quoted in *Louisiana Capitolian*, April 24, 1880.

⁸⁸ *St. Louis Dispatch*, quoted in *Opelousas Courier*, May 1, 1880.

⁸⁹ *Opelousas Courier*, February 22, 1879.

⁹⁰ *New Orleans Times*, May 8, 1880.

The Democratic State Convention met on April 12, 1880, in New Orleans. S. D. McEnery was elected temporary chairman and permanent organization was effected as follows: president, James Jefferies, secretary, Paul Waterman. There were no contesting delegations.

The Committee on Resolutions, consisting of T. T. Lyons, W. C. Flower, John Lemonier, J. André Burthe, R. C. Wood, J. Ad. Rozier, M. J. Foster, Allen Thomas, J. D. Watkins, L. M. Nutt, T. Y. Aby, Albert Gibson, F. F. Perrodin and Judge Thomas Butler, offered the following report:

Resolved by the Democratic party of the State of Louisiana in convention assembled for the purpose of electing our sixteen delegates to the Cincinnati Convention, That we present to our political brethren the name of Winfield Scott Hancock as a candidate well adapted in our judgment to nationalize the issues of the approaching Presidential contest, and to give assurance of our desire to promote concord, insure tranquility, the supremacy of the lawful authorities, and the perpetuity of our republican institutions, we hereby express our decided and qualified preference for his nomination and our belief that if so nominated his election will be ratified by the people.

Resolved further, That the sixteen delegates of this state are instructed to vote as a majority thereof may decide, except that they are hereby specially instructed to vote for the maintenance of the two-thirds rule as it has been established in all the late Democratic conventions.

Resolved, That the Convention shall proceed to elect sixteen delegates to represent the Democracy of the State in the Cincinnati Convention to be held on the 22d of June, next as follows: Four delegates at large, to be elected by the Convention, and two delegates on the recommendation of each congressional district, who, when approved by the same, shall become delegates from the State and shall receive credentials from this Convention.

John Fitzpatrick moved to amend the first resolution by inserting "4" instead of "16" and to add "acting with the two delegates elected from each Congressional district." Mr. W. W. Farmer offered an amendment, saying "This resolution is not to be construed as directly or indirectly instructing the delegates chosen by this convention as to their action in the national convention, or, as intended to influence them in their action." H. W.

Ogden opposed this amendment and offered a substitute declaring that "while the choice of the State is Hancock it is deemed inexpedient to instruct the delegates."

After considerable discussion Ogden withdrew his substitute and Farmer's amendment was tabled by 304 yeas to 152 nays. A resolution offered by Lockett, instructing the delegates to vote as the majority should decide, was adopted. The balance of the resolutions offered by the committee was accepted.

A resolution offered by a Mr. Golding, instructing the delegates not to vote for Tilden under any circumstances, was greeted with loud cheers but was voted down.⁹¹ While this resolution ably expressed the sentiments of the State with regard to Tilden,⁹² the Democrats were ready to support him or any other candidate which the Cincinnati Convention might select.

The Democrats were deeply chagrined over the failure to unseat Kellogg, which might have been accomplished had it not been opposed by many Democratic Senators. The Convention showed its displeasure by the adoption of resolutions expressing regret that certain Democratic members of the United States Senate had objected to and placed obstacles in the way of unseating Kellogg; thanking B. F. Jonas for his vindication of the claims of Spofford on the Senate floor; and urging the Democratic Senators to seat Spofford.⁹³

On the motion of J. R. Gauthreaux, the chair was directed to appoint a central committee of fifteen members from the State at large, and each parish and each ward of Orleans Parish was directed to elect one member and the said committee instructed to institute measures to carry on the approaching campaign.⁹⁴

While the Convention was in session a pamphlet appeared giving the following fourteen reasons for the nomination of Hancock:

1. He is a true exponent of Democratic theories and Democratic principles.

2. He has filled to the fullest measure the duties of a well rounded life in which are singularly blended the highest type of the American soldier and the splendid exemplification of the civic ruler.

⁹¹ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, April 13, 1880.

⁹² *New Orleans Democrat*, April 9, 1880.

⁹³ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, April 13, 1880. Spofford died during the litigation. *Louisiana Capitolian*, November 20, 1880.

⁹⁴ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, April 14, 1880.

3. He maintains the subserviency of the military to the civil authority.
4. He is, personally, the most popular man in the nation.
5. His nomination would secure thousands of votes from Union soldiers who would support no other Democratic candidate.
6. His nomination would harmonize the contending factions in New York.
7. He can carry the state of Pennsylvania.
8. His nomination would create an enthusiasm in the South as to render the result in every State beyond doubt.
9. His character and record are such that in no possible event could he be put on the defensive.
10. His nomination would antagonize no section of the country, no portion of the Democratic party.
11. He, better than any man living, can allay the passions of civil strife, drive sectionalism out of politics and forever end the "bloody shirt" crusades.
12. His entire life is an earnest that he would call none to his counsels but those on whom the country could safely rely.
13. He combines more elements of strength and availability than any other named in connection with the presidency.
14. If elected he will take his seat.⁹⁵

The New Orleans *Picayune* said:

There can be no doubt that General Hancock is the choice of the Democracy of Louisiana—so decidedly their choice that their thoughts are not turned to any other candidate as a probable or possible alternative . . . their delegates will spare no honorable effort to make the voice of the State effective. The expression of preference is equivalent to instructions to vote for him as long as he has any reasonable chance of success.⁹⁶

The Republican State Convention was scheduled to meet in New Orleans on May 24, 1880. The Shermanites realized that

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, April 13, 1880.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, April 13, 14, 1880.

Grant would have a majority in the Convention, so they prepared a roll of delegates which would include enough names to outvote the opposition. The Grantites threatened to bolt and send a contesting delegation to Chicago. Sherman men became alarmed and asked for a conference, which took place in the St. Charles Hotel on May 23. Representing the Grant faction were T. Beattie, Don A. Pardee, P. B. S. Pinchback, J. R. G. Pitkin and Dave Young; for Sherman, Collector A. S. Badger, Postmaster W. L. McMillen, Marshal Jack Wharton, Collector of Internal Revenue Morris Marks, and Naval Officer James Lewis; and for Blaine, Ex-governor H. C. Warmoth. The conference effected a compromise whereby Henry Demas was to be temporary chairman and Ex-governor Warmoth permanent chairman, and the delegation to Chicago to be composed of eight representatives for Grant, seven for Sherman and one for Blaine. The Grant supporters held a caucus, rejected the compromise by a vote of 49 to 27 and adopted a resolution demanding twelve delegates.⁹⁷

Without a doubt the Grant faction was by far the strongest in the Convention and the majority of the people of the State were in favor of Grant. The Sherman faction admitted being the weaker when it allowed the Grantites to have eight delegates to their seven. However, they were not prepared to let their rivals have twelve delegates. Sherman had distributed his patronage too liberally for that.

The Convention met in New Orleans on the appointed day. It was soon evident to the Grant men that their opponents had manipulated the roll so that they would be able to control the Convention at the outset. Taylor Beattie nominated Henry Demas temporary chairman, but A. J. Dumont refused to recognize him. District Attorney A. H. Leonard nominated A. J. Dumont. There was an uproar when Demas and Dumont both attempted to take the chair, assisted by their respective backers. During the confusion Dumont succeeded in reaching the chair. Demas mounted a chair and called upon the Grant men to follow him. Most of the Grantites, led by Demas, Pinchback, Allain and Beattie, left the convention.⁹⁸

In the regular Convention organization was effected as follows: president, H. C. Warmoth, secretary, Wm. Vigers.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, May 24, 1880.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, May 25, 1880; *Opelousas Courier*, May 29, 1880.

The committee appointed to suggest sixteen delegates to the National Convention submitted the following list which was adopted: H. C. Warmoth, James Lewis, H. T. Ludeling, A. J. Dumont, W. P. Kellogg, Richard Simms, A. S. Badger, Samuel Wakefield, A. H. Leonard, Wm. Harper, J. S. Mathews, W. L. McMillen, David Young, J. H. Burch, Jack Wharton, and Don A. Pardee.⁹⁹

The following declaration of principles was adopted:

We the Republicans of Louisiana, in convention assembled, reaffirm our allegiance and devotion to the Republican party and the principles which gave it birth. Believing that it is on the threshold of a battle that will give it a new lease on life and power, we declare our firm faith that this is a nation and not a league; that the General Government has and ought to exercise the right of protecting the purity of the ballot box, by throwing around it the safeguards necessary to procure a full and free expression of its citizens irrespective of race, nationality, or sections; that having taken charge of the reigns of government at a critical period of the country's history followed by a war that cost us thousands of lives and millions of treasure, we point with pride and admiration to its grand achievements in the rapid payment of the public debt, the reduction of taxation and the restoration of general prosperity, by giving us a bond which is at par the world over. We call upon the Republicans of the North, in the coming struggle to see that the nation takes no step backward by damaging or abridging the rights of any class of its citizens; that while we cannot have our voice and influence felt in the affairs of the state, we look anxiously and pray earnestly for the success of these principles, where free speech is tolerated and where fair play obtains. Having confidence in the patriotism, character and intelligence of those who will assemble in convention at Chicago, we hereby declare our hearty and united support for its nominees.

A resolution was also adopted endorsing Kellogg and thanking him for his manly struggles to keep his seat in the Senate.

The Grant bolters held their convention simultaneously with the regular convention. Permanent organization was effected as follows: president, Taylor Beattie; secretary, George D. May; sergeant at arms, P. Z. Canonge.

⁹⁹ This list contained seven Grant men, seven Sherman men, one Blaine man, and one doubtful (Kellogg).

The convention adopted a series of resolutions, one of which instructed delegates to vote for Grant as long as his name was before the convention.

The following delegates were selected: C. Y. Bussey, J. R. G. Pitkin, Dr. A. Duperier, J. R. Beckwith, A. A. Maurice, J. S. Davidson, Dr. B. G. Kennedy, Octave Ray, Gov. Hawkins, F. A. Cage, Henry Demas, and J. B. Gaudet.¹⁰⁰

No nomination for Congressman had been made in the First District prior to the meeting of the Democratic State Convention. The district's delegates held a meeting and nominated R. L. Gibson. This action was resented by the people who felt that the delegates had exceeded their authority. However, all differences were settled and he was accepted as the regular candidate. Judge Abell announced his candidacy as an independent.¹⁰¹

The Republicans held their convention October 25 and nominated Anatole Kerr. The convention adopted a series of resolutions endorsing A. J. Dumont and the State Central Committee over which he presided and the Pardee Campaign Committee.¹⁰²

Prior to the election a notation, "Attention voters," appeared in the *New Orleans Democrat* which cautioned voters in the district to look at the ticket to see if it contained the name of R. L. Gibson and to vote no ticket that did not have it.¹⁰³

In the Second District the Democratic executive committee met and issued a call for an election of delegates to the district convention to be held on September 17. The voters had less than a week's notice of the election.¹⁰⁴ The convention nominated E. John Ellis.¹⁰⁵ The action of the committee was denounced as being "subversive," "revolutionary" and "contrary to all Democratic usage and doctrine."¹⁰⁶ W. T. Houston, the defeated candidate, accused the committee of being "zealous partisans of Mr. Ellis" and declined to enter a contest which was conducted under conditions unfair alike to the people and himself.¹⁰⁷ In spite of the accusations the nomination of Ellis was allowed to stand.

¹⁰⁰ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, May 25, 1880.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, May 11, 1880.

¹⁰² *New Orleans Democrat*, October 26, 1880.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, November 2, 1880.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, September 14, 1880.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, September 19, 1880.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, September 15, 16, 17, 1880.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, September 16, 1880.

The Republican Convention nominated Judge Michael Hahn on the first ballot.¹⁰⁸

The success of the Democrats in the Third District was seriously jeopardized by factional strife. John S. Billiu was nominated by the convention which was held on April 13.¹⁰⁹ Acklen, his rival, was chagrined over the nomination. He got out a pamphlet of approximately forty pages in which he defended his escapade in Congress which had gained him so much notoriety.¹¹⁰ He stirred up strife in the district and encouraged various meetings which were held to denounce Billiu's nomination. Other meetings approved his nomination.¹¹¹

The *Opelousas Courier* said: "The nomination of John S. Billiu for Congress, it seems, has produced dissatisfaction among the Democrats of his district, and unless these political differences are adjusted, the election of the Democratic candidate will be endangered. The objection to Mr. Billiu is not personal, but because of an alleged irregularity in his nomination."¹¹²

The opposition was so strong that Billiu withdrew his nomination.¹¹³ The Democratic Committee called another convention. Lafayette Parish had contesting delegations which were seated on a half vote each. When the chairman refused to recognize the right of the parish to cast its full vote in the preliminary organization, it, with the parishes of Ascension, Calcasieu, Cameron, Iberia and Terrebonne, bolted and unanimously nominated Acklen. The regular convention nominated Billiu unanimously.¹¹⁴

Mass meetings were held endorsing the Morgan City regular convention and John S. Billiu, the legitimate candidate, and repudiating Acklen.¹¹⁵ The *Louisiana Capitolian* said: "We are not far short of the mark when we assert that Mr. Acklen, owing to the many troubles that have surrounded his career in Congress, is considered eminently fit to stay home."¹¹⁶ In the face

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, September 5, 1880.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, April 15, 1880.

¹¹⁰ *New Orleans Times*, June 26, 1880. Acklen was accused of introducing in the absence of Chairman King, a report relative to the claims of certain citizens against Nicaragua purporting to be the work of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. King knew nothing about the Acklen report, and the Committee had acted unfavorably on the claims. *Ibid.*, February 19, 1880.

¹¹¹ *New Orleans Times*, July 25, 27, 1880.

¹¹² *Opelousas Courier*, July 24, 1880.

¹¹³ *New Orleans Democrat*, August 10, 1880.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, September 12, 1880.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, October 1, 6, 13, 1880.

¹¹⁶ *Louisiana Capitolian*, September 25, 1880.

of strong opposition Acklen's ardor to run cooled,¹¹⁷ and in an open letter he withdrew from the race and urged his friends to vote for Billiu.¹¹⁸

The Republicans were divided into two factions,¹¹⁹ the Beattie (anti-customhouse) and the Dumont (customhouse), but they were able to agree on C. B. Darrall as their candidate.¹²⁰ There were rumors of another Republican convention in the district, but both factions denied it and declared Darrall would be the only candidate.¹²¹

In the Fourth District the Democrats had a plentiful supply of candidates. N. C. Blanchard was nominated by the convention on the seventieth ballot. All other names were withdrawn and he was nominated by acclamation.¹²² The Republicans selected A. C. Wells.¹²³ In the Fifth District the Democrats selected J. F. King and the Republicans R. H. Lanier.¹²⁴ In the Sixth District the Democrats nominated E. W. Robertson¹²⁵ whose election by an unprecedented majority was predicted.¹²⁶ The Republicans selected Alex Smith.¹²⁷

The National Republican Convention met in Chicago on June 2. George F. Hoar was elected temporary chairman. The National Committee refused to admit either of the Louisiana delegations to the temporary organization of the Convention.¹²⁸

The two contesting delegations appeared before the Committee on Credentials and pleaded for admission. H. T. Ludeling opened the case for the Warmoth delegation. He stated their side and produced various New Orleans papers to prove his contentions.

Beattie, of the Grant delegation, in reply said Ludeling's statements were totally and absolutely unsupported by fact. He made a severe onslaught on Dumont's character, saying that he was politically corrupt and had forced upon the Central Com-

¹¹⁷ *Opelousas Courier*, September 18, 25, 1880.

¹¹⁸ *New Orleans Democrat*, October 17, 1880.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, September 29, 1880.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, August 10, 1880.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, September 29, 1880.

¹²² *Ibid.*, September 8, 1880.

¹²³ *Report of the Secretary of State*, 1902, p. 571.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 572.

¹²⁵ *New Orleans Democrat*, August 10, 1880.

¹²⁶ *Opelousas Courier*, August 28, 1880.

¹²⁷ *Report of the Secretary of State*, 1902, p. 572.

¹²⁸ *New Orleans Democrat*, June 3, 1880.

mittee a bogus roll made up of customhouse employees and had broken faith in all agreements made.¹²⁹ The Committee report favored the Warmoth delegation and it was seated.¹³⁰

The platform declared in favor of national aid for public schools, encouragement of commerce and the promotion of industries; against appropriation of public funds for the support of sectarian schools and unrestricted immigration of Chinese labor; declared the Constitution of the United States to be the supreme law and not a mere contract; denounced the Democratic Party for the "habitual sacrifice of patriotism and justice to a supreme and insatiable lust of office and patronage"; asserted that they had "obstructed all efforts to promote the purity and to conserve the freedom of suffrage", had devised fraudulent certifications and returns, and had labored "unlawfully" to unseat members of Congress.¹³¹

Mr. Hayes was not a candidate for reelection, as he had pledged himself not to seek a second term. However, there was no dearth of candidates. The two strongest were U. S. Grant and James G. Blaine. Others were John Sherman, George F. Edmunds, Elihu B. Washburne and William Windom.¹³² Grant had just returned from a tour around the world and his trip across the continent was one continuous ovation. It was thought that he would have a chance to ride back into power on the strength of his personal popularity.¹³³ Those who opposed a third consecutive term saw no objection to electing Grant, since four years had elapsed since he had held the office of President.¹³⁴

The rules adopted by the Convention were, for the most part, those of 1876. One important amendment provided that when the vote of any state was announced by the chairman, if any exception should be taken to the announcement, the president of the Convention should direct the roll of the members of the delegation to be called and the result recorded in accordance with the individual votes given. This dealt a fatal blow to the unit rule.¹³⁵

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, June 4, 1880.

¹³⁰ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, June 5, 1880.

¹³¹ Edward Stanwood, *A History of the Presidency from 1788 to 1897* (Boston, 1912), 403-406.

¹³² *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, June 6, 7, 1880; Francis Curtis, *The Republican Party*, 2 vols. (New York, 1904), II, 83; Stanwood, *op. cit.*, 403.

¹³³ William Starr Meyers, *The Republican Party* (New York, 1928), 250.

¹³⁴ Stanwood, *op. cit.*, 402.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 403.

On the first ballot the voting was as follows: Grant 304, Blaine 284, Sherman 93, Edmunds 33, Washburne 31, and Windom 10. Louisiana cast eight votes for Grant, six for Sherman and two for Blaine. On the nineteenth ballot James A. Garfield received his first vote. On the twenty-fourth ballot Louisiana changed two votes from Sherman to Blaine.¹³⁶ On the thirty-fifth ballot Garfield received only 50 votes, but on the next ballot there was a stampede in his favor and he received 339 votes and was nominated. On this ballot, Louisiana cast eight for Garfield and eight for Grant. The Grant men were faithful to their candidate until the last. Chester A. Arthur was nominated for Vice President on the first ballot.¹³⁷

The nomination of Garfield was received with general satisfaction throughout the country. He had been a gallant general during the Civil war and had served continuously as a member of Congress after the conflict. The nomination of Arthur was coldly received but the Republicans, after giving vent to their feelings, were ready to support him.¹³⁸

The New Orleans *Picayune* said "Mr. Garfield is . . . a strong candidate. He is still in the prime of life; he has a fine presence of address; he is a capable man of affairs; he is learned, eloquent and plausible; he is a party favorite and will heal its dissensions and poll the full Republican vote. He will not be easily defeated."¹³⁹

The National Democratic Convention met at Cincinnati on June 22.¹⁴⁰ Simultaneously with the assembling of the Convention Tilden sent a letter in which he withdrew from the contest. The letter was so worded that it led friends and opponents to believe that he would not seek the nomination, but if he received it he would accept.¹⁴¹ The Convention failed to see the loophole, took him at his word and allowed him to retire from the contest.¹⁴²

The Louisiana delegates were uninstructed but solid for Hancock. Their headquarters were a center of activity in his

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 408; Curtis, *op. cit.*, II, 83; New Orleans *Daily Picayune*, June 8, 1880; New Orleans *Democrat*, June 8, 1880; New Orleans *Times*, June 8, 1880.

¹³⁷ New Orleans *Daily Picayune*, June 9, 1880; New Orleans *Democrat*, June 9, 1880.

¹³⁸ Stanwood, *op. cit.*, 408-409.

¹³⁹ New Orleans *Daily Picayune*, June 9, 1880.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, June 23, 1880; New Orleans *Democrat*, June 23, 1880.

¹⁴¹ New Orleans *Daily Picayune*, June 21, 1880. The New Orleans *Democrat*, June 23, 1880, said: "His letter was of course merely a bid for the nomination, and gave him an excellent opportunity to present his claims in a forcible manner upon the convention and the country, an opportunity of which he certainly made the most."

¹⁴² Frank R. Kent, *The Democratic Party* (New York, 1928), 267; New Orleans *Daily Picayune*, June 21, 1880.

favor. They received the following telegram signed by the Veteran Officers of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth Regiment of the New York Volunteers:

To the Chairman of the Louisiana Delegation.

The veteran soldiers of the last war, irrespective of party, residents of Kings County, in a spirit of fraternity, and recognizing the noble sentiments animating the true and loyal men of Louisiana, in presenting the honored name of Winfield Scott Hancock before the Democratic National Convention as the standard bearer, who, of all men, most assuredly will lead us to victory in the battle of the ballot next November, call upon you to stand firmly by him and press his claims before the sisterhood of States. We must not lose the glorious opportunity to win with the tried soldier and statesman who holds the military subservient to the civil law.¹⁴³

George Hoadly was elected temporary chairman and John W. Stevenson permanent chairman.¹⁴⁴ The platform adopted by the Convention declared the party to be opposed to "centralizationism," sumptuary laws, and Chinese immigration except for education, travel and foreign commerce; in favor of the separation of church and state, common schools, home rule, honest money, strict maintenance of public faith, state and national, subordination of military to civil power, civil service reform, preservation of the free ballot, free ships and the promotion of commerce. It denounced the fraud of 1876-1877 as a severe blow to representative government and the existing administration as "the representative of conspiracy only." The use of troops and deputy marshals at ballot boxes to intimidate and obstruct electors, and the unprecedented use of the veto to maintain its corrupt and despotic power, insulted the people and imperiled their institutions. It commended the resolution of Tilden to withdraw his candidacy and the honesty and thrift of the Democratic Congress.¹⁴⁵

The Democrats had ample presidential timber from which to select their candidate. Prominent aspirants for the nomination were Winfield Scott Hancock, Thomas F. Bayard, Henry B. Payne, Allen G. Thurman, Stephen J. Field, William Morrison, Thomas A. Hendricks, Horatio Seymour, and Samuel J. Randall.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ *New Orleans Democrat*, June 23, 1880.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, June 23, 1880.

¹⁴⁵ Stanwood, *op. cit.*, 413-414.

¹⁴⁶ Kent, *op. cit.*, 271.

Balloting was short and snappy. On the first ballot the result was as follows: Hancock 171, Bayard 163½, Hendricks 119½, Payne 81, Thurman 68½, Field 65, Morrison 62, Tilden 38, and 31 scattered.¹⁴⁷ On the second ballot Hancock received 324 votes and was nominated. His choice was made unanimous by the Convention. William H. English and Richard M. Bishop were the only candidates for the Vice-Presidency presented, but such a strong preference was expressed for English that Bishop's name was withdrawn and English was nominated unanimously.¹⁴⁸

The nomination of Hancock and English was enthusiastically received throughout the state and numerous salutes were fired in their honor.¹⁴⁹ The *Picayune* said: "Louisiana is especially grateful and happy over the success of the grand old soldier. Louisiana remembered her friend in Cincinnati and she will remember him in November."¹⁵⁰ The *New Orleans Democrat* said: "It could not have been better. The representatives of the Democracy assembled at Cincinnati deserve the thanks of the party and of the country for the manner in which they have performed the high and responsible duties which devolved upon them."¹⁵¹

The National Greenback Labor Convention met in Chicago on June 9. Gilbert De La Matyr was elected temporary chairman and Richard Trevellick permanent chairman. On an informal ballot James B. Weaver received a majority. All delegates hastened to change their votes before the first ballot was announced. On the first ballot he received the total vote. B. J. Chambers was nominated for Vice-President.¹⁵² A long series of resolutions was adopted denouncing bondholders and monopolies and favoring the protection of labor and an unlimited issue of full legal-tender money, to be manufactured by the government.¹⁵³

The Prohibitionists held their Convention at Cleveland, Ohio, on June 17, where 142 delegates gathered from twelve states. General Neal Dow of Maine was nominated for President and A. M. Thompson of Ohio for Vice-President. The Conven-

¹⁴⁷ *New Orleans Democrat*, June 24, 1880.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, June 25, 1880.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, June 25, July 7, 1880; *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, June 25, 1880; *Lincoln Sentinel* and *Port Vincent Livingstonian*, both quoted in *New Orleans Democrat*, July 7, 1880.

¹⁵⁰ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, June 25, 1880.

¹⁵¹ *New Orleans Democrat*, June 25, 1880.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, June 10, 1880.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, June 12, 1880.

tion was so insignificant that it attracted scarcely any attention, and its proceedings were ignored by the leading newspapers throughout the country.¹⁵⁴

The Greenback Party in Louisiana remained in seclusion until September 13, when they held their Convention in a hall at the corner of Girod and Camp streets in New Orleans. There were approximately thirty persons of "all colors" present, representing the parishes of Orleans, Claiborne, Baton Rouge, St. John, Ascension, and St. James. D. J. Sadler was selected temporary chairman.¹⁵⁵ The Convention closed its doors. Several days later another meeting of eight delegates was held, but reporters and the general public were excluded. The Convention accomplished nothing,¹⁵⁶ and seemingly faded out of existence.

The Greenbackers attempted to put a candidate in the field in the Second Congressional District,¹⁵⁷ but when the election occurred he had disappeared from the race.¹⁵⁸

The campaign was characterized by excessive mudslinging on the part of the Democrats. The *New Orleans Times* said of Garfield: "His ability is conceded but the purity of his public life is questioned. That he will make the contest close is admitted. But that he will achieve success is gravely doubted."¹⁵⁹

On the Pacific coast a strong prejudice against Chinese immigrants had been created chiefly by other foreign-born persons because of their monopoly of labor at reduced prices.¹⁶⁰ In 1878 Garfield had voted against a bill to limit immigration to ten persons per ship, and had later sustained the President's veto of the bill.¹⁶¹ The Democrats constantly reminded the Westerners of his action.

One of the greatest sensations in the campaign was caused by the appearance of a letter supposedly written by Garfield to H. L. Morey, of the Employers' Union, Lynn, Massachusetts, which read as follows:

Yours as relation to the Chinese problem came duly to hand.

¹⁵⁴ Stanwood, *op. cit.*, 411.

¹⁵⁵ *New Orleans Democrat*, September 14, 1880.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, September 16, 1880.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, October 29, 1880.

¹⁵⁸ *Report of the Secretary of State*, 1902, pp. 570-572. According to the *New Orleans Democrat*, October 17, 1880, Registrar Charles Cavanac refused to allow Greenback representatives at the polls because of the absence of any tangible proof that such a party existed.

¹⁵⁹ *New Orleans Times*, June 10, 1880.

¹⁶⁰ Benson J. Lossing, *History of the United States from the Aboriginal Times to the Present Day*, 8 vols. (New York, 1909), VI, 1788.

¹⁶¹ *New Orleans Democrat*, October 26, 1880.

I take it that the question of employees is only a question of private or corporate economy, and individuals, or companys have the right to buy labor where they can get it cheapest. We have a treaty with the Chinese government which should be religiously kept until its provisions are abrogated by the action of the general government, and I am not prepared to say that it should be abrogated until our great manufacturing and corporate interests are conserved in the matter of labor.¹⁶²

This letter was widely published in facsimile, to make all arguments relative to its authenticity futile. According to the *New Orleans Democrat*, it sealed the doom of Garfield's Presidential aspirations at birth.¹⁶³

Garfield authorized the National Committee to denounce the letter as a bold forgery both in its language and its sentiment.¹⁶⁴ At first the Committee denied that Morey and the Employers' Union existed, but after it was proven otherwise they declared that Garfield had not known of their existence until after the publication of the letter.¹⁶⁵

The letter did Garfield untold harm. It was published just prior to the election. The National Democratic Committee denied all connection with the letter.¹⁶⁶ Later it was proven to be a forgery and Kenward Philip was prosecuted for forging Garfield's signature and for libel for the editorial, "Lying and Sticking to It," in answer to Garfield's denial.¹⁶⁷

Garfield was described as a "bribe-taker," a "perjurer," a "sorry" and "pitiabile spectacle" as a "standard bearer."¹⁶⁸ Garfield was connected with Oakes Ames in the Credit Mobilier scandal. He received ten shares of stock gratis and a check for \$329.¹⁶⁹ The figures "329" were displayed prominently in Democratic campaign literature. He was accused of accepting a bribe of five thousand dollars for procuring a contract for paving the City of Washington with a patented wood pavement while chairman of the

¹⁶² *Ibid.*; *Louisiana Capitolian*, October 30, 1880.

¹⁶³ *New Orleans Democrat*, October 26, 1880.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, October 24, 1880.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, October 25, 1880.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, November 13, 14, 1880; *New Orleans Times*, November 13, 1880.

¹⁶⁷ *New Orleans Times*, November 14, 1880; *New Orleans Democrat*, November 14, 1880.

¹⁶⁸ *New Orleans Democrat*, June 18, 1880.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, October 26, 1880.

Committee on Appropriations.¹⁷⁰ Unfortunately the case got into the Supreme Court. The Democrats made a lively campaign document out of the portion of Justice Swayne's decision which said:

The agreement with General Garfield, a member of Congress, to pay him \$5,000 as a contingent fee for procuring a contract which was itself made to depend upon a future appropriation by Congress, which appropriation could only come from a committee of which he was chairman was a sale of influence which no veil can cover, against the plainest principles of public policy.¹⁷¹

He was also accused of inducing Illinois investors to place \$30,000 in the bogus Hogback Oil Company for which he received \$10,000.¹⁷² However, the thing Louisiana held against him most was that he was a "visiting statesman" to Louisiana to witness the electoral count in 1876.¹⁷³

Hancock's character was unassailable except that he had executed a Mrs. Surrat, but he had only obeyed orders of his superiors.¹⁷⁴ The Republicans claimed that he would pay Southern claims against the government amounting to billions of dollars if elected, but Hancock denied it and promised to veto all such legislation.¹⁷⁵

Early in 1879 many Negroes in the South began an exodus to Kansas. A circular was distributed throughout the state which was purported to be from the office of the Colored Colonization Society in Topeka. This circular sympathized with the Negroes and said the Society had been organized by the government to give 160 acres of land to each head of a family. When traced it was discovered that the society was collecting money from the Negroes.¹⁷⁶ In St. Landry Parish a white man worked up a Negro exodus secret society, and collected \$10 to \$50 from each member, according to the size of their families. He secured a large number of members but left for parts unknown with the money.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, June 22, 1880.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, June 23, 1880; *New Orleans Times*, quoted in *Opelousas Courier*, July 31, 1880.

¹⁷² *New Orleans Democrat*, July 21, 1880.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, June 18, 1880; *Louisiana Capitolian*, October 23, 1880.

¹⁷⁴ *New Orleans Democrat*, June 29, 1880.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, September 26, 1880.

¹⁷⁶ *New Orleans Weekly Democrat*, May 9, 1879; *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, June 2, 1879.

¹⁷⁷ *Washington News*, quoted in *Louisiana Capitolian*, January 31, 1880.

The *New Orleans Times* said: "The negro exodus is a great crime perpetrated on a poor and ignorant people. It was started, as we know, by a set of railway and land sharpers to rob these people of their money. It did not pay as a financial speculation, and was then taken up as a political job and is now in the hands of politicians."¹⁷⁸

A Negro convention was held in New Orleans to discuss the expediency of a general exodus westward. The meeting was very disorderly and other than listening to fiery speeches, the delegates accomplished nothing.¹⁷⁹ The leaders were actuated by political motives. They had staked their all on politics in Louisiana and had lost.¹⁸⁰

The Republicans hoped to make campaign thunder out of the exodus, but C. M. Shelby hoped to forestall this by introducing into the House a bill to inquire into the cause of the movement.¹⁸¹ The Senate Exodus Committee was not originally appointed for political purposes, but almost instantly it was seized by Radical demagogues and made to serve their party purposes. The members spent some time in New Orleans taking testimony. The report tended to show that the exodus had no political significance.¹⁸² Consequently, neither side could make any political thunder out of it and it was soon forgotten.

In 1880 the Negroes began to return. They were disgusted and more than ready to come back.¹⁸³ Many planters went to Kansas to bring them back, as the Negroes themselves were unable to pay their fare.¹⁸⁴ However, others continued to migrate even after the presidential election.¹⁸⁵ Evidently it was an agrarian problem and not a political movement.

During March and April, 1880, Negro laborers in the parishes of St. John the Baptist,¹⁸⁶ Ascension,¹⁸⁷ St. Bernard, and St. Charles rioted for higher wages. Governor Wiltz was forced to send out the militia to quiet the disturbances in

¹⁷⁸ *New Orleans Times*, December 20, 1879.

¹⁷⁹ *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, April 19, 1879.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, April 20, 1879.

¹⁸¹ *New Orleans Times*, December 17, 1879; *House Journal*, 46 Cong., 2 Sess., 82.

¹⁸² *New Orleans Democrat*, June 2, 18, 1880.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, March 6, 1880; *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, May 16, 1880.

¹⁸⁴ *New Orleans Democrat*, July 23, 29, 1880.

¹⁸⁵ *New Orleans Times*, December 15, 1880.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, March 31, 1880; *Baton Rouge Weekly Advocate*, May 7, 1880.

¹⁸⁷ *New Orleans Democrat*, April 28, 1880.

St. John¹⁸⁸ and St. Charles parishes.¹⁸⁹ It was predicted that the St. Charles strike would be held up as proof of the harsh and unjust treatment of the colored laboring classes,¹⁹⁰ but the strikes were purely labor troubles and not concerned with politics.

A Negro cadet at West Point received a threatening letter and later was bound, gagged and had his ears mutilated.¹⁹¹ A general court of inquiry investigated and reached the conclusion that Whittaker had committed the assault himself.¹⁹² General Skofield, the commandant, expressed the opinion that Whittaker had committed the outrage and had been well paid for it.¹⁹³ The Republicans had raised a loud howl and had declared that the outrage had been the work of white cadets.¹⁹⁴ They had hoped to make political capital out of the case, but the result of the investigation made it an impossibility.

The Republican campaign in New Orleans was opened by the arrest of Charles Cavanac, State Registrar of Voters, on a warrant issued by United States Commissioner Lane, on the affidavit of Charles Bowen, colored, alleging fraudulent refusal to issue registration papers. Cavanac was arraigned and required to post a bond of \$250.¹⁹⁵ On investigation it was found that the Negro had served a term of thirty days on a charge of making threats to kill and was therefore ineligible. The charge against Cavanac was dismissed.¹⁹⁶

The whites were rather sluggish about registering, but the Negroes were very prompt. Because of slow registration Cavanac decided to keep the polls open until October 30.¹⁹⁷ This was in violation of the law governing the election of presidential electors and Congressional Representatives which said registration should be closed ten days before the election.¹⁹⁸

The D. M. Pardee Republican Campaign Committee met on October 23 and adopted the following resolution:

Whereas, The continuance of the registration in the Parish of Orleans beyond the time fixed by law is a flagrant viola-

¹⁸⁸ *New Orleans Times*, April 1, 1880.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, March 19, 1880.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, March 29, 1880.

¹⁹¹ *New Orleans Democrat*, April 11, 1880.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, May 30, 1880.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, April 23, November 15, 1880.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, April 14, 1880.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, August 20, 1880.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, August 25, 1880.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, October 22, 1880.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, October 24, 1880.

tion of the letter and spirit of law, is for political ends and purposes under orders of the Democratic Committee, is in direct conflict with the opinion of the United States district attorney; Therefore be it Resolved that affidavits be made against every person who illegally registers after this date, and against the supervisor or clerk registering any person illegally with a view to arrest and persecution under the laws of the United States.

The *New Orleans Times* said of the action: "Thus develops a gigantic plot to intimidate voters and prevent further registration."¹⁹⁹ It was not surprising when a special United States deputy marshal entered the Registrar's office and announced that he would arrest anyone attempting to register. Actual arrests were made, but as far as could be ascertained no further action was taken.

The election was held on November 2, 1880. The popular vote for president in Louisiana gave Hancock 65,067, Garfield 38,628, and Weaver 442.²⁰⁰ The Democrats elected five out of six Congressmen, C. B. Darral, the Republican candidate, defeating J. S. Billiu in the Third District by a vote of 13,551 to 7,795. The Democrats elected to Congress were: R. L. Gibson, First District; E. J. Ellis, Second; N. C. Blanchard, Fourth; J. F. King, Fifth; and E. W. Robertson, Sixth.²⁰¹

The Electoral College met on December 1, 1880, and cast Louisiana's eight votes for Hancock and English. Electors Thomas C. Manning and Walter C. Flower, state at large, Emile J. O'Brien, second district, Allen Thomas, third, William H. Jack, fourth, and K. A. Cross, sixth district, were present. C. A. Butler, representing the first district and G. H. Ellis representing the fifth district, were absent. A. S. Herron was elected in place of Ellis, and E. D. White in place of Butler.²⁰²

B. H. Lanier, the Republican candidate in the fifth district, prepared to contest the election of J. F. King, charging that fraud had been perpetuated in the vote and count.²⁰³ On the face of the

¹⁹⁹ *New Orleans Times*, October 24, 1880.

²⁰⁰ *Report of the Secretary of State*, 1902, p. 583. The *New Orleans Democrat* gave the Louisiana vote as Hancock 61,988, Garfield 39,055, and Weaver 423.

²⁰¹ *Report of the Secretary of State*, 1902, pp. 570-572.

²⁰² *New Orleans Times*, December 2, 1880; *New Orleans Democrat*, December 1, 1880. The *National Republican* (Washington, D. C.), a radical party organ, raised the question of whether the electoral votes should be counted, since they had been cast at New Orleans instead of at the capital as required by a state law made in pursuance of the *United States Revised Statutes*. Since the vote of Louisiana did not affect the outcome, the matter was ignored. *New Orleans Democrat*, December 7, 1880.

²⁰³ *New Orleans Democrat*, November 18, 1880.

returns King had been elected by a large majority. Lanier did not claim to have been elected, but that he would have been elected if the election had been fairly conducted. The *Picayune* sarcastically implied that if Lanier's majority was so weak and cowardly as to let the minority browbeat it, then their candidate ought not to have the seat.²⁰⁴

In an open letter to Lanier, H. C. Mitchell, the assessor and registrar of Claiborne Parish, said:

Through the courtesy of General J. Floyd King, I am in possession of a printed notice of your contest for his seat, in which you assert the following, namely: That the registered vote of this parish stands, Republican 1,280 and Democrats 1,877, and that General King received in the last election 1,368 votes, and only 160 for yourself, and you further assert, or expect to prove, that General King did not receive 1,368 votes on the second day of November 1880, and that by means of violence, intimidation, murder, and fraud, the Republican vote of Claiborne Parish was "crushed and suppressed." This portion of your proposition or more properly, your allegation, has been branded as a damnable falsehood and sent to the world as such in public print by the commissioners and clerks of election.²⁰⁵

The Committee on Elections recommended that the case be dismissed because it was not duly prosecuted by law, and the contestant had not taken any testimony or served notice that any was to be taken. The report was adopted.²⁰⁶

The election of E. W. Robertson in the sixth district was contested by Alexander Smith. The *Louisiana Capitolian* said: "Of all the preposterous claims for seats in Congress which the Republican candidates are setting up, that of Postmaster Aleck Smith, of Baton Rouge takes the rag off the bush. In a perfectly orderly and untrammelled election, Smith was beaten in every parish of the District."²⁰⁷ His claims were not supported by facts, so the report of the Committee on Elections that the case be dismissed without prejudice was adopted.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁴ New Orleans *Daily Picayune*, January 7, 1881.

²⁰⁵ *Louisiana Capitolian*, March 24, 1881.

²⁰⁶ *Congressional Record*, 47 Cong., 1 Sess., XIII, Pt. II, 1527.

²⁰⁷ *Louisiana Capitolian*, January 22, 1881.

²⁰⁸ *Congressional Record*, 47 Cong., 1 Sess., XIII, Pt. II, 1610; *House Miscellaneous Documents*, 47 Cong., 2 Sess., IX, 284.

The *New Orleans Times* said of the election:

Not in the political history of this country has a presidential contest terminated with so little sullenness or bitterness on the part of the defeated party as that in which the Republicans have just achieved their recent decisive victory.

No loud lamentations emanate from the defeated party, nor unseemly irritating exultations from the victors.

One of the first and most impressive of these lessons is the futility of all personal assailments and detractions of candidates who are brought forward by a great political party for the chief magistracy of this republic, and the little value of the most unassailable of characters against a political sentiment backed and sustained by honest convictions.

He derived further strength from the attempt to play against him such disreputable and petty politics as that Chinese letter affair.²⁰⁹

The *Louisiana Capitolian* said: "It is useless to attempt to conceal the fact that the defeat of General Hancock has thrown confusion into the Democratic party especially in the South."²¹⁰ Nevertheless, the South's sentiments were ably expressed by the *Times*, which said: "The South intends to trouble herself very little about national politics in the immediate future, and proposes to devote her energies to the development of her material resources."²¹¹

Time was healing the wounds of Louisiana. Soon the last thorn in her side would be removed and the last vestige of carpet-bag government in Louisiana wiped out by the expiration of Kellogg's term in the Senate.

Louisiana could say with Mary E. Bryan:

The turbulent, transitional period is over; the appeals to mob law have ceased. The people have learned to assert their rights more wisely; the Government to regard them more carefully. Bitter experience has taught these lessons. Mutual sympathy and understanding open a fair prospect of union in more than name between the two sections of the Republic. In a little while our children will look back with

²⁰⁹ *New Orleans Times*, November 11, 1880.

²¹⁰ *Louisiana Tri-Weekly Capitolian*, November 13, 1880.

²¹¹ *New Orleans Times*, November 14, 1880. Barnum, the Chairman of the National Democratic Committee, charged that frauds had been committed in the election in New York. The *New Orleans Times*, November 11, 1880, said: "Mr. Barnum's charges will get little support in this section unless they are sustained by proofs so convincing as to leave little or no room for doubt."

wonder to the "dark era of carpetbag rule." A picture of that time, even imperfect as this, may then be of interest as a curious study; and, since history repeats itself, and governments and society move in circles, such a picture may be valuable as a warning.²¹²

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²¹² Mary E. Bryan, *Wild Work; the Story of the Red River Tragedy* (New York, 1881), 410.

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